

Men of the Year
**THE NEW
AMERICAN
HEROES**



Featuring
**OUR COVER
STARS**

**COLIN
KAEPERNICK**
GAL GADOT
**KEVIN
DURANT**



**BAD
HOMBRE
OF THE YEAR**

**Stephen
Colbert**



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**2017 "MOST DEPENDABLE SMALL CAR, LARGE SUV, LARGE HEAVY DUTY PICKUP AND MIDSIZE SPORTY CAR"
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The Chevrolet Sonic, Chevrolet Tahoe, Chevrolet Silverado HD and Chevrolet Camaro received the highest numerical scores in their respective segments in the J.D. Power 2017 U.S. Vehicle Dependability Study, based on responses from 35,186 U.S. original owners of 2014 model-year vehicles after three years of ownership about problems experienced in the past 12 months, surveyed in October–December 2016. The Chevrolet Malibu, Chevrolet Equinox, Chevrolet Silverado HD and Chevrolet Camaro received the highest numerical scores in their respective segments in the J.D. Power 2016 U.S. Vehicle Dependability Study, based on responses from 33,560 U.S. original owners of 2013 model-year vehicles after three years of ownership about problems experienced in the past 12 months, surveyed in October–December 2015. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com.



2017 TAHOE

2017 SS427

2017 MALIBU



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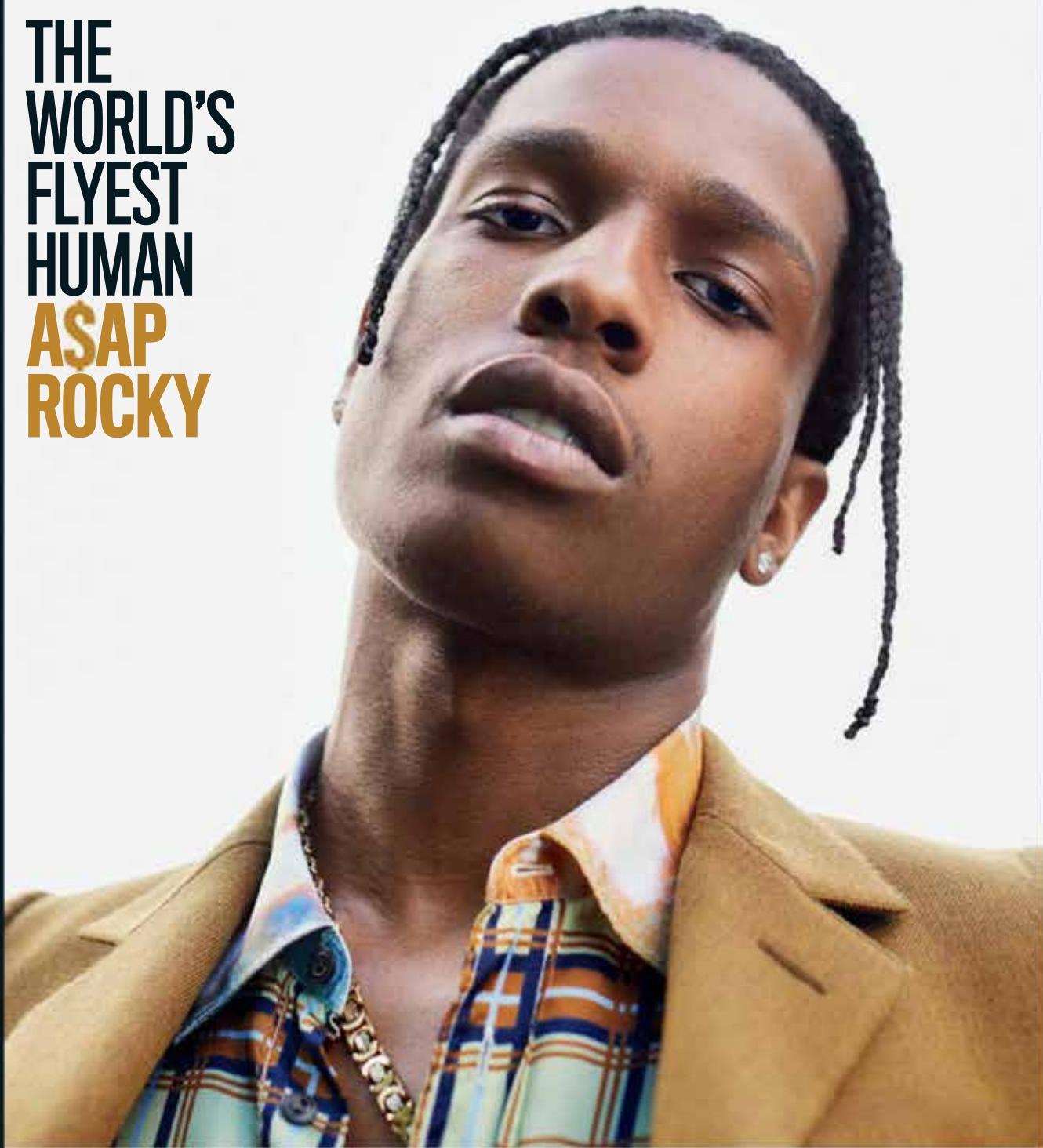
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GQ Style

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Holiday
Issue 2017

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This summer, a fire raced through London's Grenfell Tower, killing dozens. Those on hand describe what happened inside BY TOM LAMONT

KD has a lot to be happy about. This is his happy dance.

Jacket, \$795, by Coach 1941. T-shirt, \$890, by Gucci at mrporter.com. Pants, \$850, by Valentino. Bracelet by Renvi.

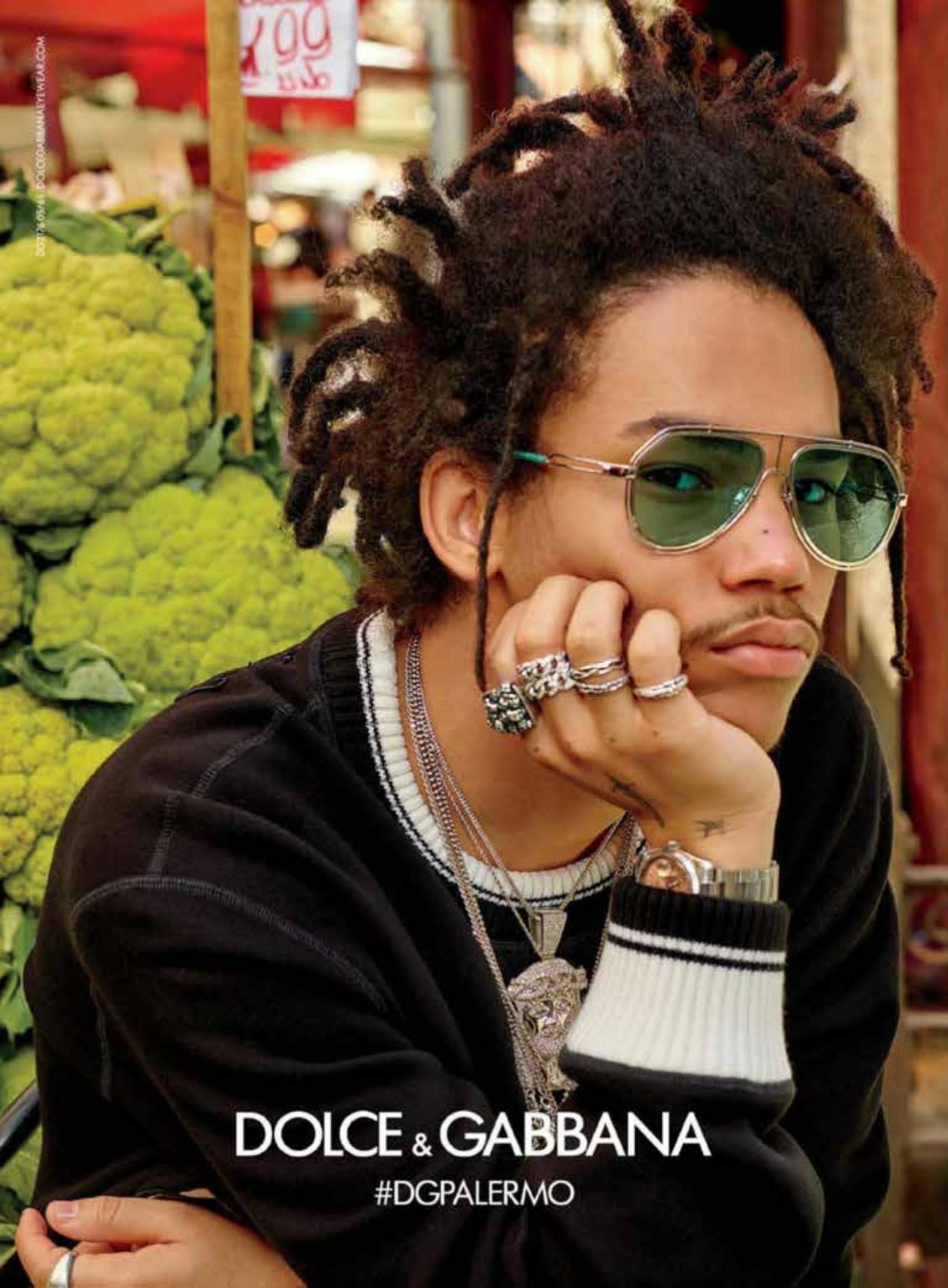
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DOLCE & GABBANA
#DGPALERMO

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He took a knee to protest police brutality and paid for it with his career. That puts him in some rare company—athletes who risked everything to change society

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The scene-stealers (and killer clowns) of the year show off the fashion steals (and killer trends) of the year

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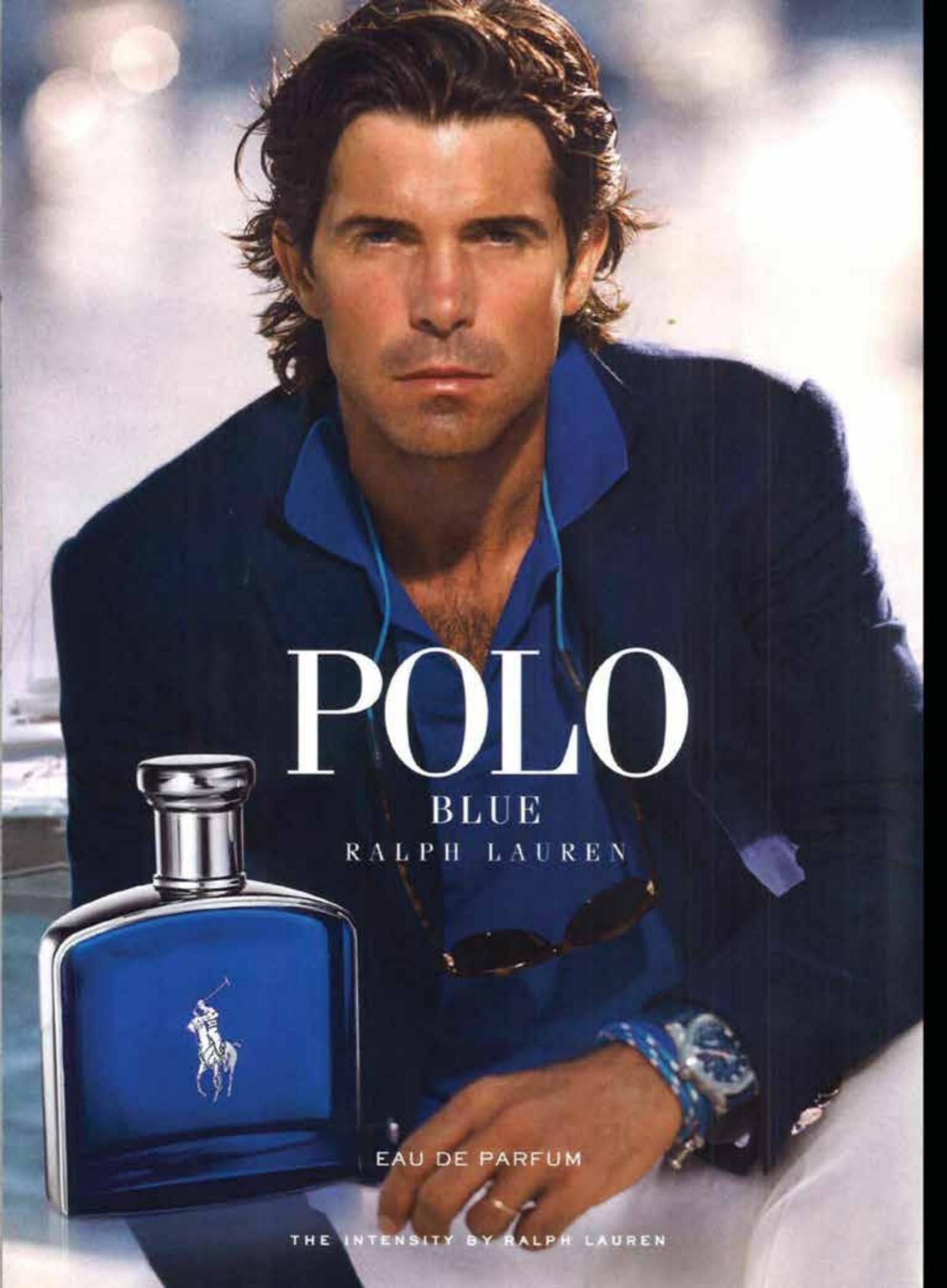
162 *The Dunkirk Guys*

Colin Kaepernick walks tall on the streets of Harlem.

Jacket, \$2,000,
by Harlem Haberdashery.

Turtleneck,
\$575, and tuxedo
pants, \$800,
by Waraine
Boswell. Watch
by Cartier.
Necklaces, his own.





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Covers

MARK SELIGER

On Stephen Colbert
Tuxedo, \$2,995, and shirt, \$425, by Ralph Lauren. Glasses by Barton Perreira. Hair by Thom Priano for R+Co. haircare. Colbert's personal makeup artist: Kerrie Plant-Price. Graffiti artist: Stash @mr_stash. Props and set design by Juliet Jernigan at CLM. Produced by Coco Knudson for Seliger Studio.

NATHANIEL GOLDBERG

On Kevin Durant
Sports jacket, \$3,250, and tuxedo pants, \$1,420, by Tom Ford. T-shirt, \$128, by Hiro Clark. Necklace by Giles & Brother. Watch by Rolex. Barber: Eric Adams using Andis. Grooming by Hee Soo Kwon using La Mer. Props by Ward Robinson for Wooden Ladder. Produced by Brandon Zagha.

CASS BIRD

On Gal Gadot
Tuxedo jacket (women's), \$2,890, and pants (men's), \$1,420, by Tom Ford. T-shirt, \$27, by Trash and Vaudeville. Necklace by Tiffany & Co. Hair by Esther Langham. Makeup by Frank B. Manicure by Lolly Koon for Chanel les Vernis. Set design by Marla Weinhoff. Produced by Paula Navratil and Tyler Strawhecker for PRODn at Art + Commerce. Location: New York Town House provided by April Asset Holdings LLC.

MARTIN SCHOELLER

On Colin Kaepernick
Tuxedo jacket, \$1,675, and turtleneck, \$575, by Warre Boswell. Necklace, his own. Hair by Shakella K Lewis. Grooming by Barry White for barrywhitemensgrooming.com. Contributing stylist: Rachel Johnston at thomasfaison.com. Props and set design by Juliet Jernigan at CLM. Produced by Louise Lund and Devon Reitzel Munson for kf Production.

Where to buy it

Where are the items in this issue available? Go to the fashion directories on GQ.com to find out. All prices quoted are approximate and subject to change.

This is not
Armie Hammer's
first time under a
ceiling mirror.

Turtleneck, \$598,
shirt, \$128, and
pants, \$228,
by Michael Kors.
Sneakers by
Adidas Originals.
Bracelet by
David Yurman.
Location: Baldwin
Hills Motor Inn,
Los Angeles.

Fashion

Peak Style

Twin Peaks hero Kyle MacLachlan wears the best suits of 2017 BY CHRIS HEATH

Movie-Star Looks

Armie Hammer, star of Oscar contender *Call Me by Your Name*, in the five fashion trends that rocked our world this year BY DANIEL RILEY

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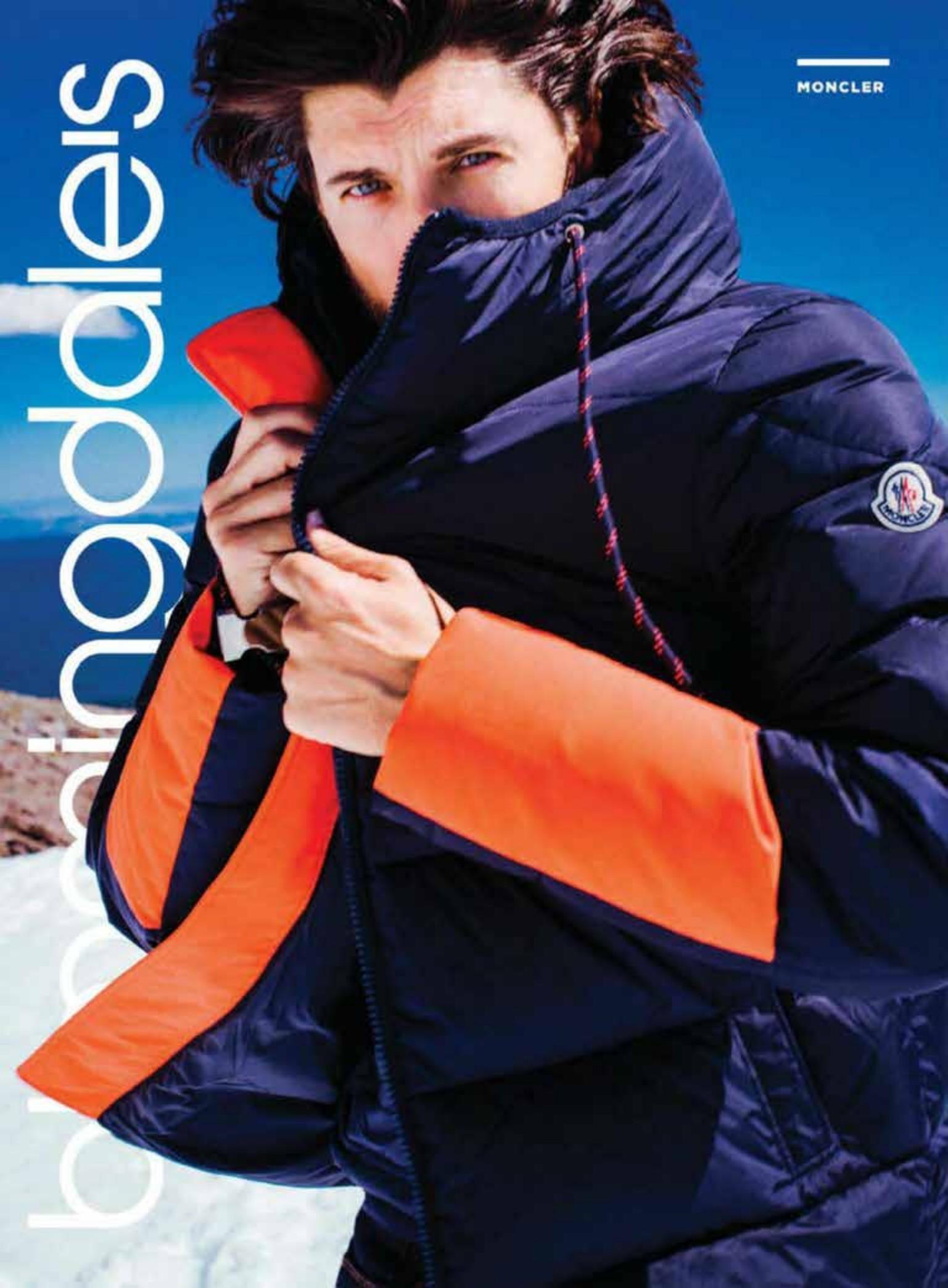


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THE MVP STYLE CONTEST

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Photo credit: Elizabeth Dooley



Photo credit: Elizabeth Dooley

THE GENT—SOHO, NYC

GQ's invitation-only penthouse serves as an exclusive hangout for some of the most influential names in fashion, food, and music. Inspired by the pages of GQ, the three-story luxury apartment features hand-selected furnishings, archival GQ photography, and custom interior design by Homeage. The Gent's modern aesthetic and sleek finishes reflect the perfect combination of eclectic and cool.

@GQTHEGENT

This Is Only a Test



DO YOU REMEMBER those tests that used to run on television, bracing the nation for an eventual cataclysm? A newscaster with a firm but comforting voice would narrate these alerts calmly, like a man sipping herbal tea at the apocalypse: *This is a test of the Emergency Broadcasting System.... This is only a test....*

(Maybe they still run on TV. I don't know. I have Netflix.) Then came a long, insistent tone, which was more jarring than deafening, like the P.A. signal blast of an alien invasion. Or the last thing you hear before the asteroid collides with your DirecTV dish.

The tone screeched on and on for a full half a minute or so, just enough to get the message across: *Hey, America! Just scaring the shit out of you for 30 seconds. Don't say we didn't warn you when firestorms and the barren, subarctic conditions that accompany nuclear winter make your television inoperable.* Then the Kai Ryssdal of the Apocalypse would come back on to tell you, *No worries, everything's cool again.*

Man, this whole year has felt like one long, endless test of the Emergency Broadcasting System. Every morning I wake up to that dissonant sound-fury playing in my brain, but now the screech will not stop. It's as if my alarm clock, along with the news, has been hacked by emergency broadcasters. I hit the alarm; it keeps blaring. *This is only a test.* I run to my phone to see if the republic is still standing—I always know that Trump has been awake for hours, which is NEVER GOOD—to see if He has summoned the nukes from North Korea out of their locust sleep.

This is a test, for sure. This is the test they were always warning us about.

NOT ONLY HAS this year unnerved many Americans; it's really made us question what it means to be patriotic. It used to be clear. You salute the flag. You cherish democracy. You support the troops. You think Ronald Reagan was amazing.

But it's not clear anymore. One creepy orange man with a malevolent streak and an ice-cold heart flipped the script and distorted the terms. I used to think of the president as the über-patriot of the nation, the commander in chief who leads and loves this country, reveres its history, and reads fat LBJ bios in his spare time.

What a lot of us have been facing is a blunt and devastating thought: Our president is *not* a patriot. *The Washington Post* recently asked the question flat-out: "Is the president a patriot?" In a hell of a speech the same week, Senator John McCain answered the question without naming Trump (he didn't need to) when he called the president's "half-baked spurious nationalism...unpatriotic."

Damn. *Unpatriotic.* That's a McCain burn. Yet we all know in our hearts that it's true: Trump ran for the highest office not to serve and unite the country but to indulge his vanity, road-test his pride, and elevate his own ego. Many of the things he's done are patently *un-patriotic*. He's insulted war heroes, Gold Star families, and half the people in this issue. He's stood up for secessionists who, by definition, did not love this country. He's made excuses for

Russian hackers who, by intention, do not love this country. Donald Trump has always been in it for himself, not for the country. He might *like* the country, the way you like Splenda, or your cousin's birthday 'Grams, but he ain't in love.

FOR SOMEONE WHO HAS so little respect for institutions, for fellow humans, for... almost anything, it was laughable to hear Trump say that the Colin Kaepernick protest—which was really a human-rights protest, about criminal justice and equality before the law, an urgent conversation we need to have and which Trump would very much like to suppress—was a matter of "respect" for the flag and the country.

Is it possible that the bigger man, the real patriot if you want to call him that, in the saga of Trump vs. Kaepernick is Colin the Brave? That his protest, nonviolent, thoughtful, and morally motivated, was done out of greater love and for a higher purpose than Trump could ever even understand? I don't doubt it for a second. I think history, the great repatriator, will be incredibly kind to Kaepernick and incredibly rude to Trump.

The whole thing got so distorted that recently I had to figure out how I felt when the national anthem was performed at a sporting event. Okay, it was the New Hope, Pennsylvania, annual High Heels Drag Race, in which men in dresses and high heels have to run up and down a hill holding pumpkins. The fastest runner to cross the finish line without fumbling over their stilettos wins. Good, clean American fun—except with gourds and mascara! But the best part was the anthem before the race. A beautiful drag queen sang it from the bottom of her American heart, and sweet Jesus, did she nail it. I had chills even before she hit "the dawn's early light."

That's what the NFL needs, I thought: more patriotic drag queens to remind us that we are the land of the free and the home of the brave.

JIM NELSON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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LOUIS VUITTON



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► The latest news from the monthly, the daily, and the all-the-time-ly world of GQ

Your Favorite...



...Feature Story: "A Most American Terrorist"

► "You've always had poor white people in America, right?" Rachel Kadzzi Ghansah told NPR in the weeks after her wrenching story about Dylan Roof hit newsstands. "What you haven't always had...is the discussion of where these people come from and what they do with their anger."

...Instagram: Ryan Gosling

► We thought Craig McDean's photo of Ryan Gosling in a Hungarian bath would quench America's Gosling thirst, but the thirst persisted. Heart-eyed emojis jammed up the comments section of our most liked non-archival photo of 2017 for weeks.



...Profile: Brad Pitt

► It could have been Ryan McGinley's dramatic shots of Pitt diving into dunes in White Sands. It could have been Pitt's raw answers to Michael Paterniti's questions about life after divorce. Whatever it was, the summer GQ Style cover story struck a chord with millions of readers.



GQ PREFERENCES THAT LETTERS TO THE EDITOR BE SENT TO LETTERS@GQ.COM.
LETTERS MAY BE EDITED.



...Contributor:

KEITH OLBERMANN

► GQ's own Man of the Year has doggedly chronicled the darkest moments of the Trump administration in his thrice-weekly video series, *The Resistance with Keith Olbermann*, which has spawned a book, *Trump Is F*cking Crazy*. All episodes can be found at GQ.com.

What is your goal for *The Resistance* going forward?

We'll keep doing this as long as it's necessary—until Trump resigns and flees the country. I would like nothing better than to be sitting here one day and find out we're totally put out of business by circumstances.

What's a line that we can whip out to shut down conversations with the Trump supporters in our lives this Thanksgiving?

Well, I think that the only thing that seems to have registered is: He's sold everyone else out—when do you think he's gonna get around to selling you out? That does seem to resonate.

The most popular episode this year was "How the Media Needs to Respond to Trump Now." Do you think we're doing better or worse?

Oh, much worse. You see how many times somebody—not just conservatives but liberals—has said, "This is the night he became president." This constant insistence that there's going to be a pivot of some sort. Every time I went to cover a sporting event, I went into a room full of sports reporters who were all trained and expecting and hoping that they would see something they've never seen before.

Political reporters are exactly the opposite: Nothing that has not happened before could possibly happen in the future. This is outside your realm of experience.

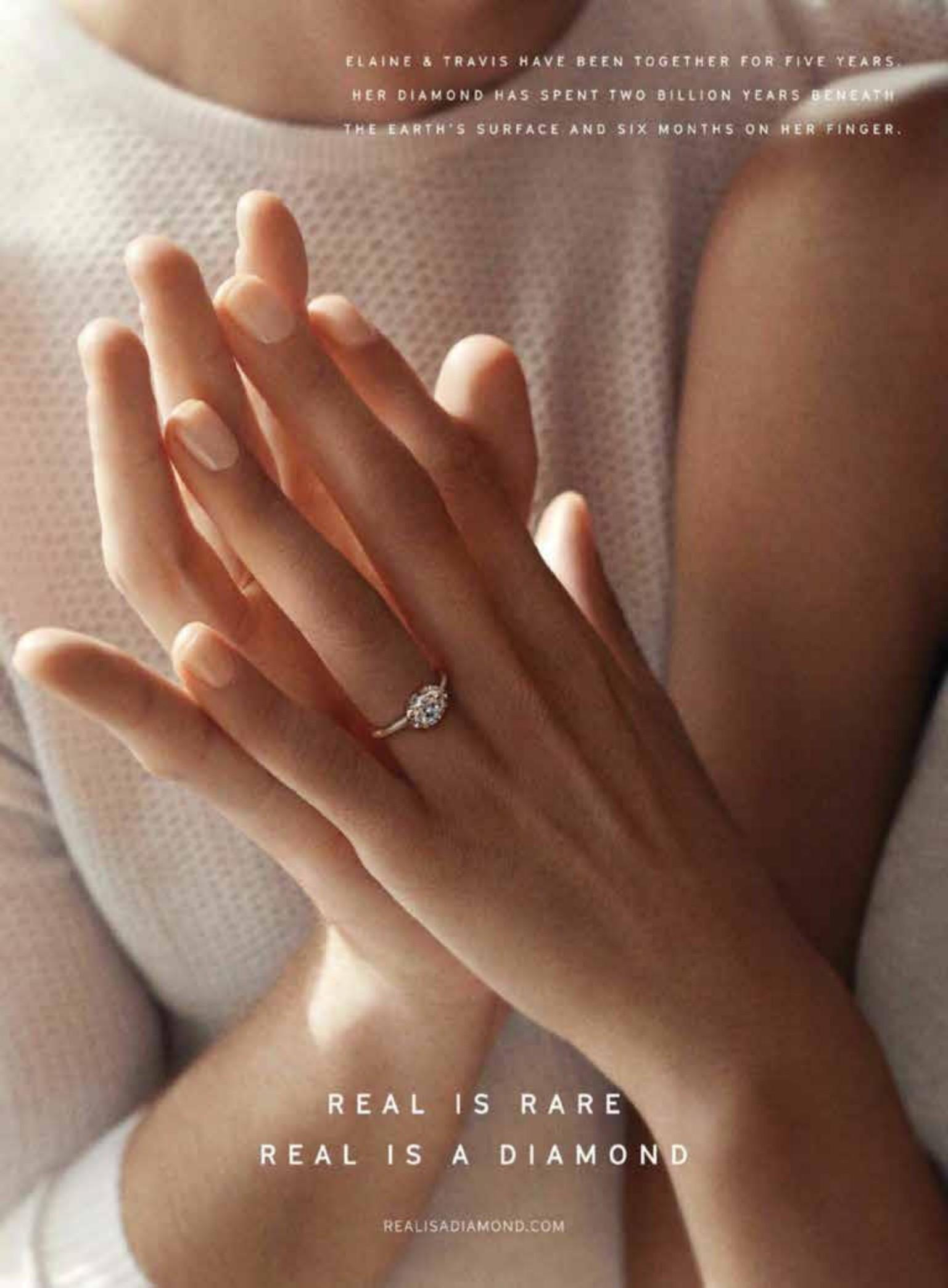
Do you think *The Resistance* is an antidote to that kind of coverage?

I did something similar a decade ago with Bush when I was at MSNBC, and I wasn't sure what the value of it was, or what its purpose was. But many of the reactions to that, ten years ago, and many of the reactions to this, now, are the same: "Thank God you noticed that, too. I thought I was the only one who had." So more than anything else, it's reassurance that people's skepticism is appropriate to the circumstances.

What's the best style tip you've picked up from your time working with GQ?

I walked in with my big shirt, my contrasting-design tie, and [fashion editor] Jon Tietz went, "Just try this": white shirt with a dark blue or just monochrome jacket and a tie that looked like one my father had thrown out when I was 7 years old—narrow tie, narrow lapels. He went, "Just give it a try. Once." And after I saw the first video, I said, "When did I lose the 25 pounds?"

ELAINE & TRAVIS HAVE BEEN TOGETHER FOR FIVE YEARS.
HER DIAMOND HAS SPENT TWO BILLION YEARS BENEATH
THE EARTH'S SURFACE AND SIX MONTHS ON HER FINGER.



REAL IS RARE
REAL IS A DIAMOND

REALISADIAMOND.COM

Get the GQ Look



Gucci track pants

More on page 148

LIKE WHAT
YOU SEE
IN THE PAGES
OF GQ?
NOW YOU CAN
GET IT—AND
WEAR IT—
RIGHT AWAY

► EACH MONTH, the editors of *GQ* will select a series of items from our pages available through our online retail partner, MrPorter.com

► TO LEARN more—and see different ways to wear what we've chosen this month—go to GQ.com/selects

Just a few of our picks from this issue...



Lanvin jacket
Page 64



Gucci sweater
More on page 122



Ralph Lauren tuxedo
Page 115



Calvin Klein 205W39NYC
suit More on page 66



BORN TO DARE

One of the most dynamic personalities of our time, she has elevated her style to the level of performance art. Whether as a songwriter, singer, actor or fashion icon, her dynamism is without peer. But she didn't set out to be one of a kind. She was born this way. Some are born to follow. Others are #BornToDare.

BLACK BAY



LADY GAGA

TUDOR

THIS HOLIDAY, BIGGER IS BETTER.

Introducing the limited-edition one-liter bottle of Patrón Silver, filled with the same ultra-premium tequila found in our traditional bottle, only 33% more. Featuring a vibrant design depicting the meticulous process required to handcraft our tequila, it's the perfect gift for anyone on your list.



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HOLIDAY PATRÓN SILVER BOTTLE.

SIMPLY PERFECT.[™]
patrontequila.com/limited

Manusi

1 of 8 →

▼
How does something go from "stuff" to "Best Stuff"? Does it look better than anything like it? Does it work better? Is it essential and enviable? If the answer is "Absolutely!" then it makes the cut. We tested, drove, cooked with, drank, inhaled, and generally delighted in a lot of stuff this year, but this stuff? This is the best

AMANDA RINGSTAD

PROP STYLIST: ALEX BRANNIAN AT ART DEPARTMENT
*Boie USA
Toothbrush*



2017

Best Stuff

PLUS OPENING PAGE

It's Been a Very Black Year

+

\$12 for toothbrush
boieusa.com
\$1,000 for mixer
kitchenaid.com

- There are two reasons *GQ* is running photos of a toothbrush and a stand mixer to kick off Best Stuff. The first: Because they're so, so black. It's been a dark time in lots of ways but especially with design, where black is all over watches, sneakers, underwear, and phones. Second: Because **Boie USA**, an N.Y.C.-based start-up, actually built a better toothbrush, which they're calling...**Toothbrush**. The genius is in the disposable brush section, which you replace every two or three weeks instead of throwing the whole thing in the trash and wasting a whole lot of plastic. And this limited-edition **Black Tie** stand mixer? It's not any different from the KitchenAid you may already own—except that its matte black finish makes baking cookies seem like an even darker art than usual. Black is way back.



Minimal assembly required; blowtorch not included.

The Coolest Thing in Pizza-Making Since Stuffed Crust

+

\$299
uuni.net

- Until now, the only way to achieve a perfectly blistered pie at home has been with a backyard stonework that makes pizza seem less like dinner and more like a lifestyle choice. The **Uuni 3** (invented in the UK by a pizza-loving Finn) gets the same results but from a sleek, portable steel unit that's smaller than the sack of wood pellets you need to keep it fired up. Throw a handful of them into a box in the back and light them with a small blowtorch. Then wait for the flames to fan out across the ceiling of the cooking chamber—you'll have a properly cooked pizza in about 60 seconds.

BOSS
HUGO BOSS

BOSS BOTTLED TONIC
#MANOFTODAY

CHRIS HEMSWORTH



Best Stuff

Objects on Wall Are Louder Than They Appear

+

\$4,000 for six
bang-olufsen.com

- Behind the hexagons that make up **Bang & Olufsen's BeoSound Shape system**, of which there are many colors and infinite pleasing combinations, are an amp, speakers, and foam acoustic dampeners. (You can mount as few as 6 tiles on your wall and more than 50 if you like.) The sound is clear and powerful but, somehow, not overpowering, like a soundtrack playing behind a dinner party in a movie. (Hi-fi tip: If the music feels immersive but you can have a conversation over it, you're listening to some damn good speakers.)



Also comes in
 not-pink.



- The **Igloohome Smart Keybox** loops around a metal railing or gate and allows you to stuff a key in for safekeeping. Igloohome's app generates PIN codes to the padlock set for one time, a duration, or forever. The upshots: You don't need to install a smart door lock, you don't have to change your key box every time you fire a cat sitter, and you never again have to interact with an Airbnb guest.

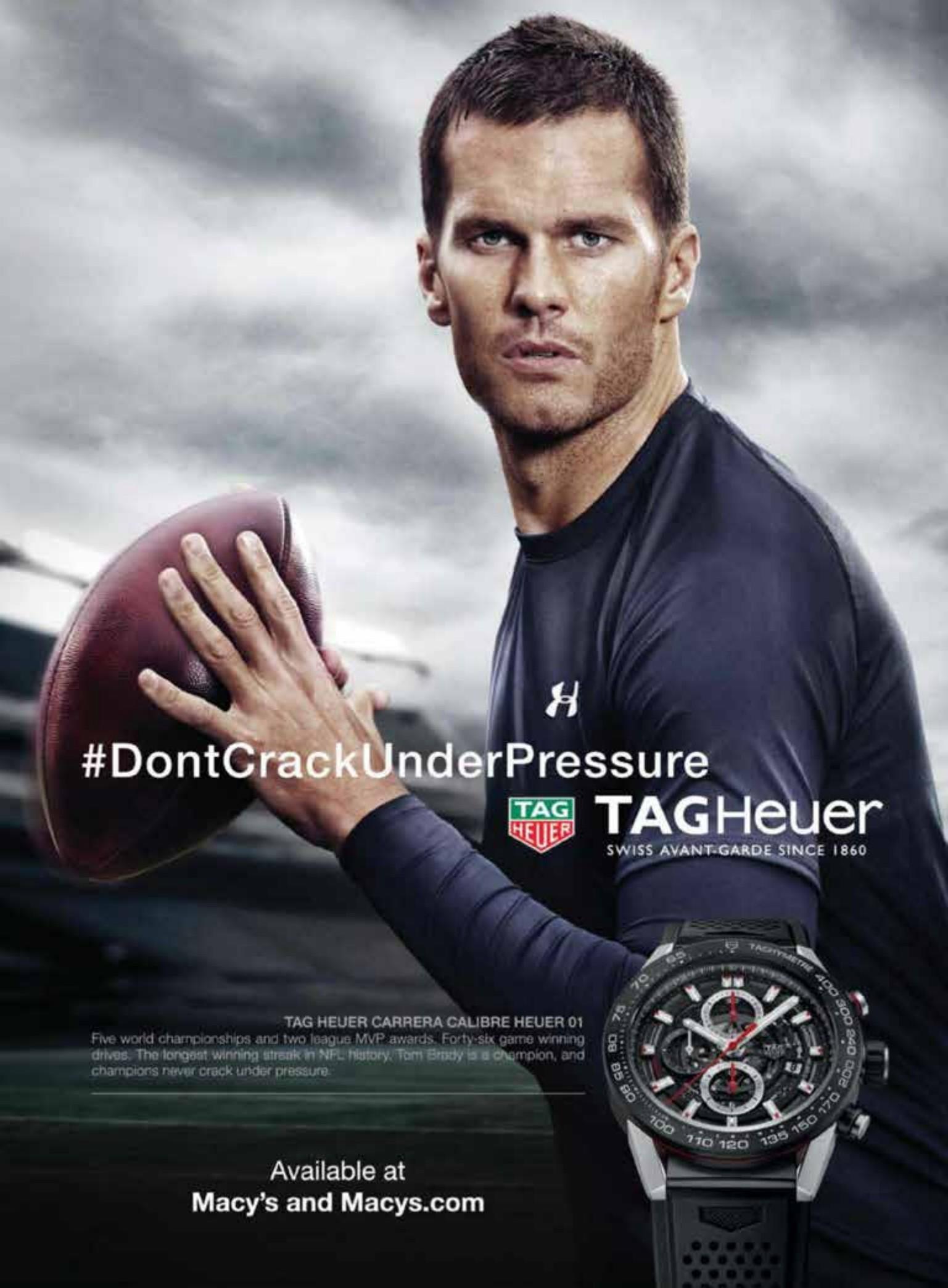


The High-Art Pen Holder

+

\$220
spadonehome.com

- Spadone makes all kinds of small home goods out of its Kennebunk, Maine, studio—only it doesn't make them all with trendy materials like ceramics, stone, or wood. This planter (or pen holder), which they call **Miami Motel Vessel**, is made from the same stuff that's used for faux-marble kitchen surfaces. It's a countertop for your countertop.

A black and white photograph of Tom Brady. He is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt with a small 'H' logo on the chest. He is holding a football in his right hand, which is positioned towards the bottom left of the frame. His gaze is directed towards the camera with a serious expression. The background is a dramatic, cloudy sky.

#DontCrackUnderPressure

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SWISS AVANT-GARDE SINCE 1860

TAG HEUER CARRERA CALIBRE HEUER 01

Five world championships and two league MVP awards. Forty-six game winning drives. The longest winning streak in NFL history. Tom Brady is a champion, and champions never crack under pressure.



Available at
Macy's and Macys.com

Best Stuff



Let Your Tray Do the Talking

+

from \$700
hermes.com

- These leather-and-wood trays from **Hermès** call to mind cartoon conversation bubbles, lending a Pop-art vibe to something that usually rests quietly on a table. Use them for any purpose—change holder, remote-control caddy, butterscotch valet (love ya, Granny)—including starting a conversation.



Ring Is Fire

+

\$30
craighill.co

- A little thoughtful engineering and some finely milled brass turn this everyday tool into something that feels like a piece of art. These American-made **Closed Helix Keyrings** by Brooklyn design house **Craighill** feature the simplest mechanism (one end unscrews), but the transformation in your relationship to the annoying, jangly things you're forced to carry in your pocket is huge.



A Classic Caribbean Beach Cruiser Hits the Streets

+

\$24,950
mokeinternational.com

- Not because the **Moke** was designed, in the '50s, as a parachute-droppable whip for the British military. Not because Brigitte Bardot spent the '70s driving one around St. Tropez. Not because it was Hunter S. Thompson's ride while reporting from Grenada in the '80s. The long-awaited reissue of the Moke—a hundred models this year, 500 more on the way—gets our vote because of its price. If you live anywhere with a summer, meet your new second car.

BUFFALO
DAVID BITTON

www.buffalojeans.com



Best Stuff

*This Year,
Your Home
Bar Gets
Weird*

+

\$50
kikoriwhiskey.com
\$25
lofiaperitifs.com
\$40
seedlipdrinks.com

• Alcohol's been around awhile—9,000 years, give or take—and by now the categories are pretty clear. But there are still surprises. **Kikori**, a Japanese rice whisky, gets all the nuance of barrel-aging you'd expect from a good scotch but matches it to the bright citric base typical of sake.

Lo-Fi Aperitifs, a line of vermouths and amari, vinted in Napa, have Americanized the typically sleepy world of after-dinner drinks and cocktail ingredients.

And then there's **Seedlip**. What to

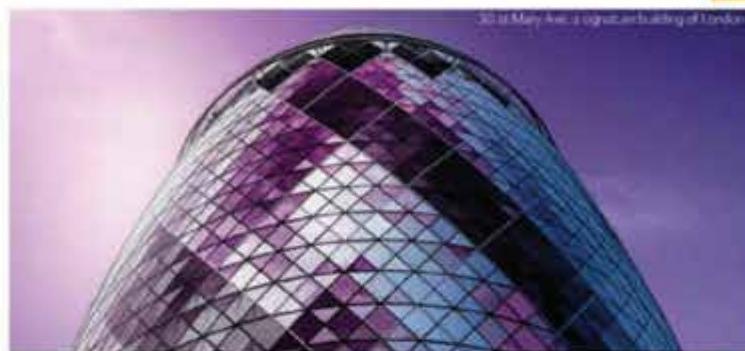
make of the first "non-alcoholic spirit"? Let's put it this way: If it didn't hold up, we wouldn't let it get away with a phrase like that. A blend of herbs and botanicals, it expands the menu for non-drinkers and is a gift to bartenders looking to play around without adding booze. (Maybe that's why so many top-notch bars, including N.Y.C.'s famed Dead Rabbit, have signed on.) It's like gin without the kick, and it kills in a glass of tonic. If given the option, we'll still take the gin, but it's nice to know there's now a choice.



The ripple carafe and glasses from Ferm Living are beautiful, impossibly thin, and super-inexpensive. fermliving.com; carafe, \$41; glasses, \$48 for 4

R. Murphy's "Jackson Cannon" bar saw is a heftier version of its now legendary (in fruit-cutting circles at least) bar knife. rmurphyknives.com, \$89

The Danish furniture design house Hay transforms the lowly cutting board into a thick and durable polyethylene masterpiece. hay.dk, from \$29



*Included TV co-AI Beam is required for TV operation.

State University of Music and Performing Arts, a signature building of Stuttgart



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Best Stuff



It's a desk for your feet.



The 'Twin Peaks' of Chessboards

+
\$1,400
concretecat.com

• Every design shop we hit this year in Portland, Austin, and San Francisco seemed to have a drippy, trippy tabletop sculpture by the Canadian mom-and-pop brand **Concrete Cat**. And every time we'd hoist each vase, ashtray, cheese board, and stash box to get a closer look at the swirly patterns, we'd think, "This'll be a fortune to ship home." Also: "It's totally worth it." The object we wanted most was this **handmade chess set**, inspired by the mysterious Black Lodge netherworld in *Twin Peaks*. It's heavy in the best, most Lynchian sense. Your move, Log Lady.



Like a Surfboard for Your Standing Desk

+
\$489
fluidstance.com

• At *GQ*, we're not standing at our desks because of all those reports that sitting will kill you. (Stop ruining everything, CNN!) What's next? Smoke breaks?! It's because standing increases energy expenditure, thus burns more calories, especially when you do it on a balance board. Our favorite is the sculptural **FluidStance**, a deck (and meeting conversation piece) that subtly shifts your weight around while making it impossible for you to fall. We promise.



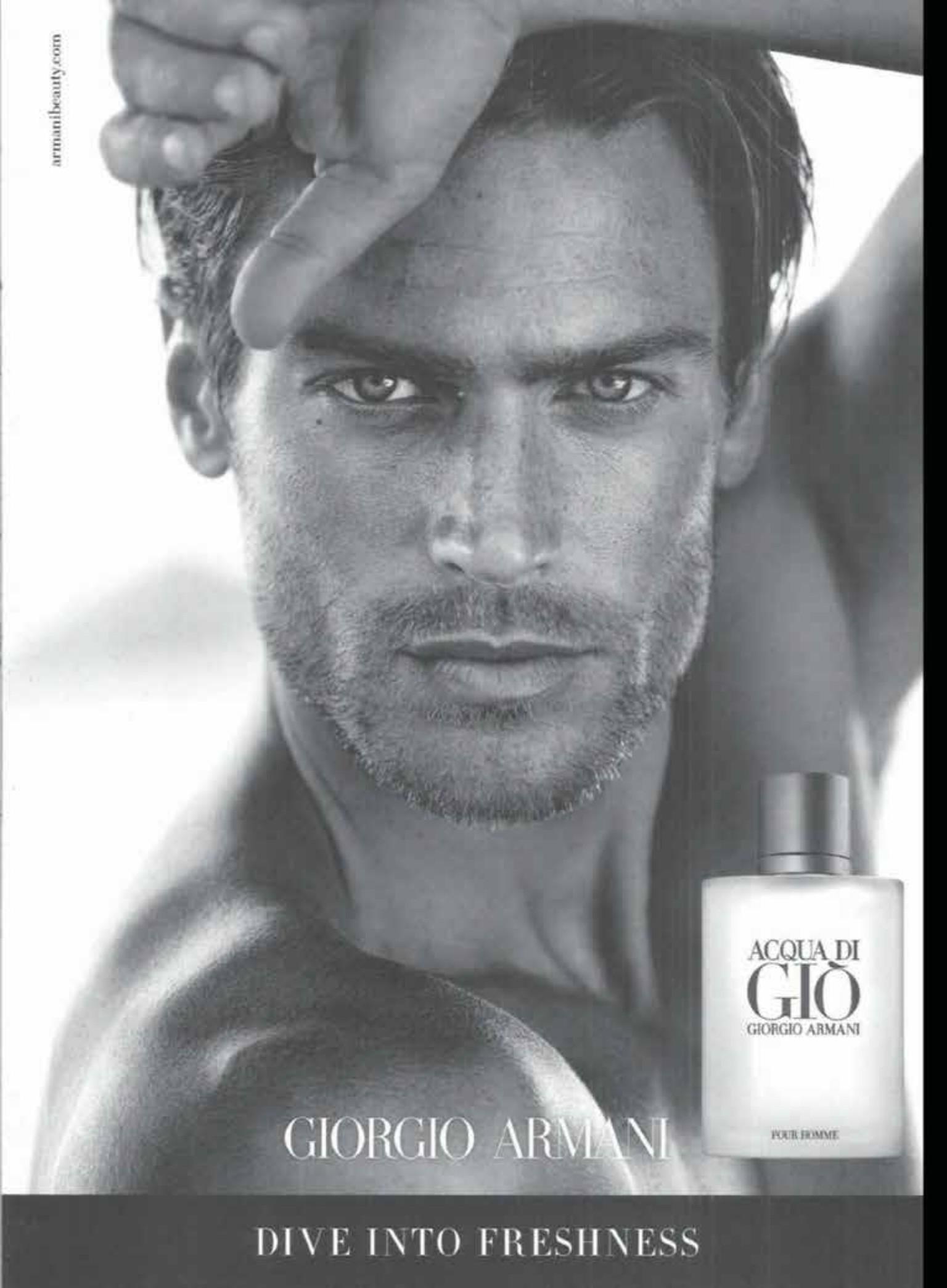
These pluggable units mean Wi-Fi wherever you need it.



Plug and Play

+
\$269 for a 6-pack (\$159 for a 3-pack)
plumewifi.com

• Mesh Wi-Fi allows you to plug an "extender" into an outlet in each room and send the signal evenly throughout. **Plume** goes a step further and optimizes where the signal should be, based on where your gadgets are. Or you can use the app to shut down your 5-year-old's network so you can stream your Netflix at resolution. Get a job, kiddo!



GIORGIO ARMANI

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GIÒ
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POUR HOMME

DIVE INTO FRESHNESS

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ULTA.COM

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JOHN ELLIOTT



BOTTEGA VENETA



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KINGSMAN



PRADA



BURBERRY



Best Stuff



Sick Burner

+
\$85
weseestars.com

- Incense burners have long been trapped in a psychedelic head-shop-y design phase. Whether or not you're putting it to use, this piece by Brooklyn designer Yoav Menachem is sculpture for your coffee table.



Your mouth goes here.

It Buzzes. You're Buzzed.

+
\$100
hmbldt.com

- Weed-delivery innovator **Hmbldt** has mastered not just aesthetics (its **dose pen**, good for 200 hits, could be sold in an Apple Store) but also tech, a rarity in the pot world. The pen vibrates when you've inhaled just the right amount, which makes getting high a pleasantly predictable endeavor, not a dice roll on the Too Fucked-up to Function craps table.





Made by hand for those who value perfection.

Hundreds of individual parts compose this Hi-Beat mechanical watch. Our master watchmakers polish and fine-tune many of them to an accuracy of 1/1,000th of a millimeter. When you observe the precisely polished surfaces of the hands and dial, you will see an intricate play of light and shadow that expresses the subtle aesthetics of Japanese craftsmanship. Dedication to perfection pursued for more than half a century.

grand-seiko.us.com

9S86 Mechanical Hi-Beat 36000 GMT
36,000 vibration-per-hour movement; 55-hour power reserve.



GS
Grand Seiko

Best Stuff

***Paul Smith
Gets Lit***

+
Mini, \$195;
Giant, \$4,300
anglepoise.com

• An office staple since 1934 (and a Pixar icon since 1986), the **Anglepoise task lamp** is somehow getting even more iconic now that the British clothing designer **Paul Smith** has applied three of his

favorite color palettes to it. You can get it in the classic size (26 inches), but we prefer either very small, like the brand-new Mini edition (20 inches), or very, very big, like the Giant edition (nine feet).



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NICK MARINO,
GARRETT MUNCE,
ANNA PEELE



SHERRY OAK 12



DOUBLE CASK 12

TWO UNIQUE EXPRESSIONS. ONE CELEBRATED HOUSE.

A RICH CLASSIC MEETS ITS SMOOTH CONTEMPORARY COUNTERPART.
THE MACALLAN 12 YEAR RANGE. MAKE YOUR STATEMENT.

M

Grooming ► The Year in Kemptness 2017

Grooming director Garrett Munce looks back at a year that was way groom-ier than usual. Plus: tips on working each trend into your own style

WHAT THE HELL: The most visible look of the year was the unnatural dye job—Frank Ocean pink and blue; Jaden Smith green or red—on close-cropped hair. It's an '80s-punk fuck-you look interpreted by the millennial hip-hop set.

HOW TO PULL IT OFF: The darker your natural (a.k.a. un-festive) hair is, the harder it will be to bleach it white, an important step in getting the brightest color possible. So find yourself a professional colorist... and slip them a great tip *between* steps.

The Technicolor Crop

Frank Ocean
+
Jaden Smith



WHAT THE HELL: Extremely visible hand tattoos showed up on extremely visible people—from Zayn (*LOVE* on his right hand, a flower on his left) to Brooklyn Beckham (a ‘Murican eagle similar to one of his dad’s).

HOW TO PULL IT OFF: Remember that job-stoppers (as permanently visible tattoos are still known) on celebrities won't have any effect whatsoever on *their* jobs. So start with something small (like the words "team-oriented"?) at the base of your thumb.

Tats Get Out of Hand

**James Van Der Beek
+
Joe Jonas**

WHAT THE HELL: James Van Der Beek and Joe Jonas aren't going to be entering any over-the-top-mustache competitions, and that's precisely the point. They've helped usher in a new era of un-gimmicky retro facial hair.

HOW TO PULL IT OFF: A mustache can easily make you look like a stand-in for *Magnum, P.I.* Don't ever go full handlebar or you-know-who small, and make sure you're prepared for the *Bob's Burgers* jokes that get less and less funny.



A circular logo containing the text "Year of the Shear".

Robert Pattinson
+
Chris Pine

WHAT THE HELL: Nothing is more dramatic than a celebrity hair god going short, and you'll notice that over half the guys pictured on this page did it. The buzz cut is all about maximum impact while keeping your cool.

HOW TO PULL IT OFF: A No. 2 guard and a whole lot of courage. You may not think you can pull it off, but the buzz looks good on most everyone. (Though a strong jawline and a thick set of eyebrows, like Chris Pine's, certainly help.)



GROOMSMAN
OF THE YEAR
Jon Hamm

- Post-*Mad Men*, the actor has become way more rugged-looking—well-kept beard, slightly longer hair, just the right level of tan—but he hasn't lost any of the sophistication. Hamm, who's been open about his recent recovery, proves you don't get an "I've been on vacation for three months" glow by doing the things you'd do if you were actually on vacation for three months. Jon Hamm, here's looking at your look.



AZZARO
WANTED



The new fragrance

AZZARO

Macy's and Macys.com

M

Swerve of the Year

The Biggest Trend in Pants Is... Big Pants

It's the First Commandment of fashion: Thou shalt not wear ill-fitting pants. So imagine our surprise when designers started rolling out extra-roomy trousers—and then our shock when we realized we loved them

Everyone who's seen *Scarface* knows the 1980s were all about flamboyant, strong-shouldered power suits. Kurt Cobain's '90s gave us moth-eaten flannels that hung off our bodies by a thread. And for the past decade, we—and by "we" I mean the kind of people who get into bar arguments about Hedi Slimane—have worn nothing but slim-fitting pants. It's been wonderful. Trim pants flatten our guts, show off our shoes, and guarantee a certain level of respectability even when we're getting dressed with an apocalyptic hangover.

But over the years, some of us have gotten fidgety in our britches. We've strained our seams and burst our buttons



fitting into those damn pants. So when I stumbled upon a pair of voluminous tweed trousers at a shop in Paris circa 2015, I got curious. Over in France, guys wore pants that were...baggy? The idea stuck with me, and when I returned home to the States I improvised with a pair of navy J.Crew chinos four sizes larger than I normally wear, secured with a belt and cuffed above the ankle. They felt incredible: My pants didn't fit, but they *fit*. They were relaxed, and far more comfortable than anything else I owned. They also made me look a little weird, in a good way—as if I'd found an escape hatch from the fashion monoculture.

Since then, labels across the menswear spectrum—like Louis Vuitton, Lanvin, and AMI—have made trousers variously described as slouchy, ballooning, wide-leg, or straight-up oversize. The new silhouette is trim like your favorite chinos at the waist but blooming out from the thigh down. These are pants your grandfather might have worn in the '40s, redone in modern silhouettes and materials.

The trick is wearing them in un-grandfatherly ways: spilling over the tops of NASA-grade sneakers (as seen here) or tapering to a chunky cuff above beat-up dress shoes. Don't be nervous. You got this. Remember, the guy in baggy pants puts them on one leg at a time.—SAM SCHUBER

Pants, \$1,090, by Lanvin, at 807 Madison Ave., N.Y.C., 212-812-2866
+
Jacket (at mrporter.com), \$1,195, sneakers, \$625, and backpack by Lanvin



ALDO

Ethan's all smiles in Valewan boots
Discover more in-store and at aldoshoes.com



I  making you smile

Ethan Turnbull - Actor

Check Out Khalid!

Our favorite 19-year-old R&B singer became a sensation this year—and so did checkerboard suits. When we brought the two together, we knew we had a hit



The Clothes

• Going into this photo shoot, Khalid didn't know his own suit size. "I went to prom and all of that," he told us, "but I wore tuxes and I didn't get them tailored." Now that he has to dress for red carpets—like at this year's VMAs (where he won Best New Artist)—he needed help. So we measured him up and styled him in the most exciting suit pattern around: checks that feel lifted straight off a pair of Vans. You actually *could* wear a suit like this with skate shoes and a tee. But to look like a genuine star, follow Khalid's lead.
—BRENNAN CARLEY

Suit, \$2,980, by Gucci, at Gucci, nationwide, gucci.com

+
Shirt, \$360, and tie, \$200, by Gucci. Watch by Movado. Ring by David Yurman.

The Man

→ Just one year ago, Khalid Robinson was finishing high school in El Paso. Now, thanks to his slinky hookup jam "Location," he's collaborated with power players Calvin Harris, Future, and Lorde. Khalid has had such a big year that when we reached him on the phone, he was shopping for a Range Rover. "You know what's crazy?" he said. "My song is playing right now in this dealership." He laughed a teenager's laugh. "It's insane." —B.C.



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The Goods

► The Meeting of the Design Gods

We introduced Off-White founder Virgil Abloh to Nike legend Tinker Hatfield. The icon and the icon-to-be discussed Abloh's Nike collaboration and how to update a perfect thing

1 of 2



→ Finally meeting one of his design heroes for the first time, Virgil Abloh breaks the ice with two words: career suicide. That's what he says could have happened had his re-interpretation of ten of Nike's classic sneakers gone wrong. After his collaborations with Levi's, Ikea, and the New York City Ballet, the bar is high for anything Abloh touches. But it's stratospheric when he's tinkering with gems like the Air Max 90—perfect-

the-first-time shoes created by sneaker-design G.O.A.T. and Nike design VP Tinker Hatfield, the man he's now sitting with in an iridescent igloo at Nike's Beaverton, Oregon, headquarters (design gods don't convene in Starbucks).

"What's this guy all about?" Hatfield remembers thinking when he first saw Abloh's Air Max 90 design. There was "sample" taping still on the Air Max 90s and orange tabs that looked like Post-it notes. Abloh had



▲ Hatfield and Abloh in Nike's new Blue Ribbon Design Studio—half Santa's workshop, half Willy Wonka wonderland.

◀ Abloh's re-imagined Air Jordan I.

Setting the gold standard
for silver tequila.

#AShotWorthTaking



A
**SHOT
WORTH
TAKING**

100% PURO AGAVE TEQUILA



1

Frankensteined them into instant classics. Hatfield was looking at not only the sneaker of the year but also the result of a tug-of-war between respect and innovation that Abloh experienced as he re-imagined the shoes. So what was Abloh all about? He was all about figuring out how to modify a superlative thing.

First step: Compare yourself to the originator. The differences between the two men and their work are major: Abloh, 37, is

high fashion's current thought leader, whereas Hatfield, almost 30 years older, has solidified his place in not just the sneaker hall of fame (and it's a pantheon at this point) but also the design hall of fame.

But both have architecture backgrounds. Both were introduced to the world by legends (Abloh via Kanye West, Hatfield via Michael Jordan). Both are way more warm and gracious than you'd expect design gods to be. And both



2

have other creative outlets that spark their design minds. "I have a keyboard and a guitar in my studio," Hatfield says. "I DJ more than I design," says Abloh.

So, how'd the Abloh-Hatfield collaboration turn out? Abloh says he didn't go punk rock on the mash-up. "These sneakers are icons," he says. "I'm not going to be punk and irreverent. But the one thing the kids don't understand when they see something in its final form is: You had to fight for it."

"Always," Hatfield responds. "I'll say to [Nike CEO] Mark Parker, 'People are



3

How to Reboot Something Perfect

See what Abloh pulled out of his bag of tricks to better perfect perfection.—M.A.G.



• You know it came out of Virgil Abloh's studio if it's stamped with a word in all caps and quotes—the designer's signature.

The Ten: Nike Air Presto x Virgil Abloh | \$160 | [nike.com](#)



• The ultimate tribute to Hatfield: Abloh made his sneakers look halfway finished.

The Ten: Nike Air Max 90 x Virgil Abloh | \$160 | [nike.com](#)



• In a hyper-minimal design world, bigger logos are a no-go. Which is exactly why Abloh took that route.

The Ten: Nike Blazer x Virgil Abloh | \$130 | [nike.com](#)

“These sneakers are icons. I'm not going to be irreverent.” —**Virgil Abloh**



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macys.com/gifts



1. HIP HOP: A CULTURAL ODYSSEY

Created for Macy's. \$40. WebID: 5156363

2. STEVE MADDEN Smoking slippers, from:

top: Caviar, \$100. WebID: 4886977; Caviar Rhinestone, \$125. WebID: 2946094; Crowne, \$100. WebID: 4886978

3. INC INTERNATIONAL CONCEPTS®

Created for Macy's. intarsia sweaters, \$59.50 ea.

WebID: 4887606

4. COACH Eau de Toilette Spray, 3.3 oz., \$82

WebID: 4931668



1. LEVI'S®

Trucker jacket, \$38.

WebID 2386760

2. G-SHOCK

New & created

for Macy's.

35th Anniversary

special edition G-Shock

watch with hat or scarf

gift sets, \$99 ea.

WebID 5216322, 5218319

3. DISNEY® X

KIEHL'S

4-pc. set Ultimate Man

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a \$68 value.

WebID 5215280

4. 32 DEGREES

Packable bomber

jacket, \$175.

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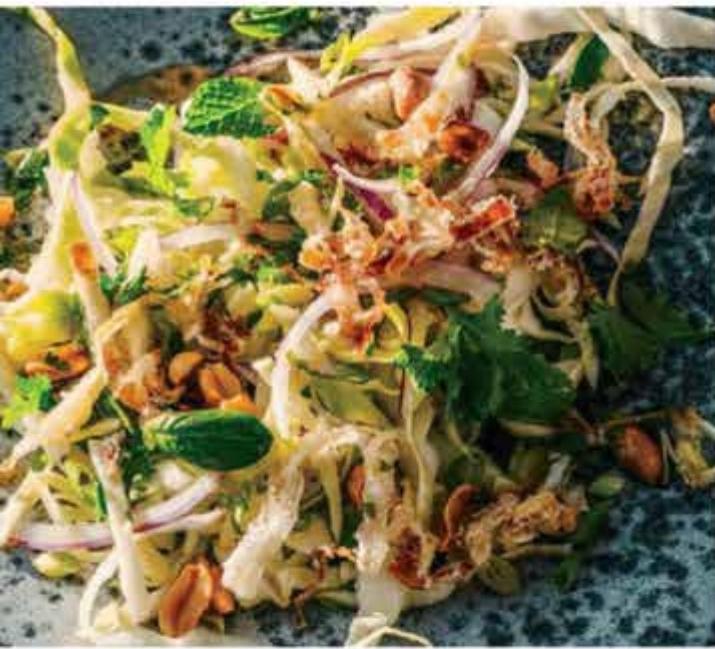


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macys

Keep the Salad Days of Summer Going All Winter Long

Winter can seem like a long string of bitter days and soggy vegetables. Our favorite new cure? Mastering the art of the cold-weather salad



Give Cabbage a Kick

Thai-Kun food truck | Austin

• One surefire way to heat up winter: Cook with Thai-style acid and spice. Slice a head of **green cabbage** into strips and store it overnight in a brine of **white vinegar**, sugar, and salt. Mix half in a bowl with chopped **herbs** (cilantro, mint, Thai basil), quartered **cucumbers**, cilantro stems, and sliced **red onion**. Dredge the other half in **rice flour**, fry it, and salt it. Combine and toss ingredients. Garnish with **peanuts**, **white pepper**, and sliced **green onions**, and dress with **chile sauce**. "It's a yin and yang," says chef Thai Changthong. "You taste the cold and the warm."

Be a Healthier Hipster

Dimes restaurant | N.Y.C.

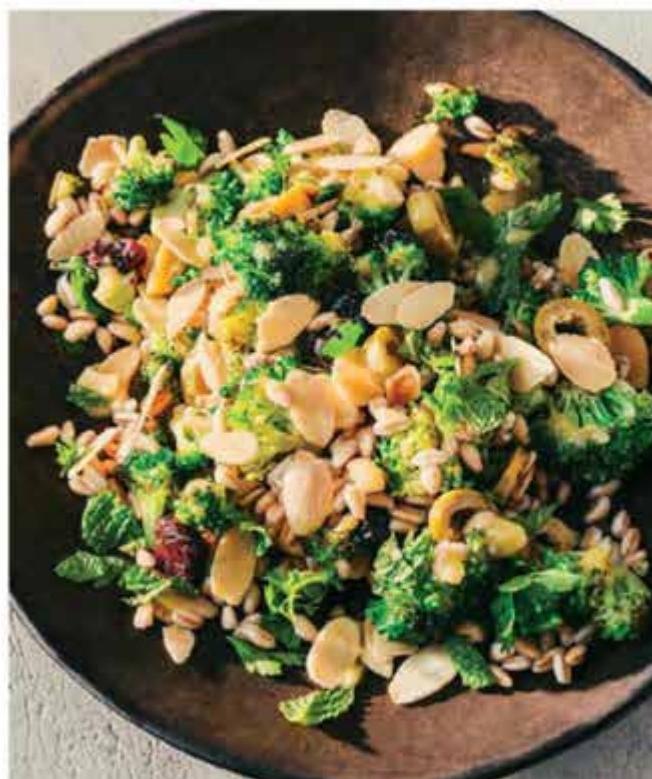
• Let it be known that farro is the new quinoa. Boiled like pasta, this ancient grain has what chef Alissa Wagner calls "a warming nuttiness." Toss your cooked **farro** with a bright miso-lemon dressing—blend **lemon juice** and **white miso paste** with shallot, garlic, Dijon mustard, olive oil, vinegar, and salt—and then combine it with roasted **broccoli**, dried **cherries**, sliced **olives**, and half a tablespoon each of chopped **parsley** and chopped **mint**. If your grocer stocks **sumac**, great. Throw some in. Top with toasted **almonds** and serve warm (like the cockles of your heart).



Try On the Fur Coat of Salads

Kachka restaurant | Portland, OR

• A psychedelic hockey puck of produce, chef Bonnie Morales's signature Herring Under a Fur Coat is essentially a seven-layer dip served at parties in the former Soviet republics. It's easier to make than it looks. Using a \$6 ring mold you bought for this occasion, start with a layer of grated steamed **potatoes**. Then top it with diced **herring** (mixed with chopped **onion** and **dill**), grated steamed **carrots**, grated roasted **beets**, **mayo**, chopped-up **hard-boiled-egg whites**, and finally the **yolks**. To drink? Make it even more Russian with ice-cold vodka.—NICK MARINO



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44 Things You May Have Missed While the World Was Melting Down



A FEW THINGS IN CULTURE broke through the noise since the election. *Wonder Woman*. *It*. DJ Khaled's baby.

More often, though, the pop stuff you normally would've found yourself devouring was buried beneath an avalanche of breaking-news alerts. *That movie came out the night Mooch was fired?* No wonder you missed it. *The dishy book that fizzed onto the scene the week of the Comey hearings?* Who can blame you for not noticing?

But worry not! We've compiled the definitive list of the culture you may have missed out on. And so before the year's up, treat yourself to some good old-fashioned pop distraction like you did in the quaint times we like to call Before We Knew Who Maggie Haberman Was.

► NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2016
11/8 The election of Donald J. Trump to the presidency



11/9 "One More Night" Video Debut
Michael Kiwanuka
► One of our favorite singles on the London-based musician's trippy new record blew up in the UK last fall and got an even trippier accompanying music video.

► NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2016
11/13 Steve Bannon named senior adviser to POTUS



11/15 *Swing Time* by Zadie Smith
► We'll never not associate Queen Zadie's latest opus with election week, when its bright cover shared space with Trump headlines and analysis on the *NYT* home page.

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JANUARY

1/10 Trump pee-tape dossier released



1/17 *Homesick for Another World*
by Ottessa Moshfegh
• This story collection is the even better successor to Moshfegh's much loved and David Sedaris-approved *Eileen*. It's dark and weird and funny and unsettling. In exactly the opposite way of the dark, weird, funny, unsettling things happening in Washington.

1/20 Inauguration Day



1/20 *20th Century Women*
by Mike Mills

► The follow-up to Mike Mills's *Beginners*, a heartbreakingly semi-autobiographical film about a man's complicated relationship with his dad, is—what else?—a heartbreakingly semi-autobiographical film about a boy's complicated relationship with his mom, played by Annette Bening in full over-this-shit mode.

TWO THINGS FILMMAKER MIKE MILLS IS WORRIED YOU MISSED (Plus Another He Wants to Make Sure You Don't)



1. The New York Times podcast *The Daily*

My favorite news source. Seriously, it helps my brain so much to actually sit and think about one thing that long. It's both more casual and more in-depth than most of my news intake.

2. American Dream by LCD Soundsystem

This is maybe my favorite record of theirs—so emotional and feral at the same time. What a testament to getting better and older.

3. Greta Gerwig's Lady Bird

This movie is what I'm most excited to see this year. My great collaborator on *20th* and such a total, complete filmmaker brain—I can't wait to see her take off. [Mike, we watched it, and it's great: See page 82.]

FEBRUARY

1/30 Acting Attorney General Sally Yates fired



2/1 Jeff Sessions gets Senate committee approval for A.G.

2/8 *Legion* (FX)

► Google "Legion kitchen explosion"—then stream the rest of *Fargo* creator Noah Hawley's magnificently beautiful and supremely weird story about a mutant who is rescued from a mental asylum and haunted by a monster played by *Park and Recreation*'s Aubrey Plaza.

2/13 *I Am Not Your Negro*

► Director Raoul Peck and narrator Samuel L. Jackson build a shattering documentary based on an unpublished manuscript by James Baldwin, crafting portraits of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, and the psychological burden of racism through Baldwin's unflinching prose.



MARCH

3/2 White House verifies meeting between Kushner and Kislyak

3/11 *Mommy Dead and Dearest* (HBO)
► It sounds more like the plot of a particularly screwed-up season of *American Horror Story* than a documentary: A woman confines her healthy daughter to a wheelchair for most of her childhood, has doctors put in a feeding tube, and convinces everyone that the girl has cancer. An online romance ends with the mother stabbed to death. The girl pleads guilty but says she didn't want it to happen. Director Erin Lee Carr's doc asks: Given everything that went down...can you blame her?

3/6 Trump Travel Ban #2

3/14 *White Tears*
by Hari Kunzru
• Two white New York hipsters who love black music (it's *feye roll*) "more intense and authentic than anything made by white people" get in trouble after recording a fake blues song. *White Tears* goes from hilarious to scary—a novel about cultural appropriation that grapples with the ghosts of America.

3/28 Trump signs executive order reversing CO₂ caps



3/28 *S-Town*

► By the teams behind *Serial* and *This American Life*, Brian Reed's seven-part podcast starts out as a murder mystery and turns into a character study of a disturbed, clock-making genius stuck in the small Alabama town of the title. (The "S" stands for "shit.")

APRIL

3/23–4/6 "Nuclear option" debated for Neil Gorsuch Supreme Court confirmation



4/4
Tell Me How It Ends
by Valeria Luiselli

• A timely, personal, precise investigation into exodus and citizenship by the Mexican-born, New York City-based Valeria Luiselli (*Faces in the Crowd*). Her book-length essay springs from her work translating for migrant children and is structured around the 40-part intake questionnaire that can determine their fate. She articulates the refugee crisis in this country with an intelligence and care that's missing from the debate among lawmakers.

4/6 U.S. missile strike on Syrian airfield

4/7
Win It All
► The great gambling film of the year? Probably. The great Chicago film of the year? Almost certainly. Jake Johnson, a charming Second City drifter (specifically: a Cubs parking attendant) who sinks or swims on the back of his recent run at the card table, gets into hot water when he can't help but gamble away the bag of cash a shady buddy gives him to hold. This movie is lived-in in the best way—a trademark of director Joe Swanberg.

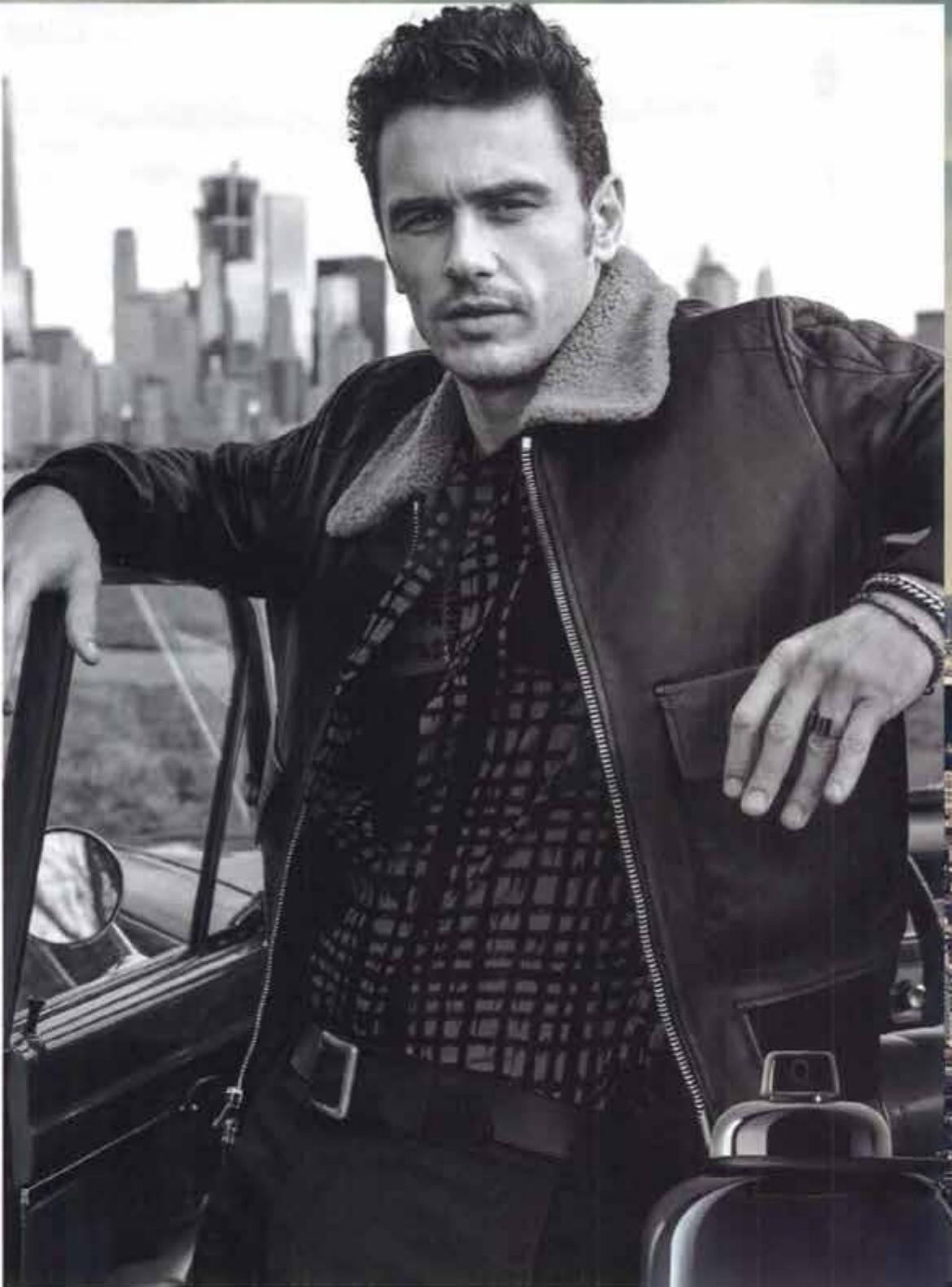
COUNTER-PROGRAMMING THE APOCALYPSE
Three very relaxing shows that have absolutely nothing to do with Donald Tr*mp

► The Great British Baking Show (PBS)

Kindly British people take baked goods very seriously.

► RuPaul's Drag Race (VH1)
Drag queens compete in challenges like starring in a campy original musical about the Kardashians.

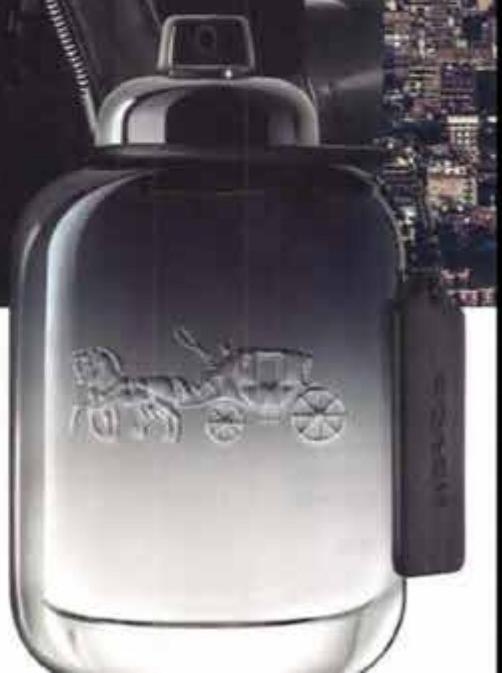
► My Lottery Dream Home (HGTV)
Lottery winners (often from "scratchers") look for modest homes in secondary markets.



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Pop Culture

MAY

5/4 House votes to repeal ACA



5/5 *No Shape*

Perfume Genius

► Pop succeeds when the songs lean directly into their loud, brazen pomp and circumstance. *Perfume Genius* tilts so far toward absurdity on his stunner-after-stunner LP that you fear he'll stumble. He never does.

5/9 James Comey fired



5/19 *Goths*

The Mountain Goats

► This year, Mountain Goats frontman John Darnielle gave us a record we were waiting for. (And, as a bonus, a suspenseful second work of fiction, *Universal Harvester*.)

5/16–5/22

Comey Memo Week!

5/23

Meet Me in the Bathroom: Rebirth and Rock and Roll in New York City 2001–2011
by Lizzy Goodman

► The 2000s N.Y.C. music scene, as told by those who lived it, loved it, and played it. If you so much as spent a night out in the East Village, on the Lower East Side, or in Williamsburg this century, scoring your exploits with records by the Strokes, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Interpol, Vampire Weekend, or LCD Soundsystem, you have a vested interest in this essential document of cultural history. (Which just happens to include many entertaining tidbits about how out of control early-millennium Ryan Adams was.)

JUNE

6/8 James Comey testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee



6/9 *It Comes at Night*

► Joel Edgerton and Christopher Abbott (and a freaky red door) are at their best in this woodsy thriller. Edgerton and his family are hiding out in a cabin from an unspecified viral outbreak that has killed off a large number of people and upended civilization. In an effort to survive, they seal themselves off from the world and hoard their dwindling resources. When a strange family, headed by Abbott, shows up, claustrophobia and paranoia abound.

6/13 Jeff Sessions Senate testimony; Kislyak meeting exposed



6/16 *Melodrama*

Lorde

► Okay, maybe this one got its due. But may we suggest that as you cruise back through this tour of the chaotic summer that was, you fire it up and let it serve as the soundtrack?

6/22 First Senate health-care bill unveiled



6/25 *Preacher*

season two (AMC)

► Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg's graphic-novel adaptation is turning out killer performances (as in, they're a murderous pastor and his retinue, one of whom is a vampire, the other his hell-raising girlfriend) from Dominic Cooper, Joe Gilgun, and Ruth Negga.

JULY

7/4 North Korea tests a missile that could reach Alaska

7/4 *Who Is Rich?*

by Matthew Klam

► Seventeen years after his first book, *Sam the Cat*, Matthew Klam gave us one of our favorite novels of the summer—a book about a cartoonist whose days of acclaim are behind him and who instead teaches for a week each summer at an arts camp for adults. This thing is so precisely drawn—on middle age, marriage, sex, art, rich people—that the dark laughs feel especially well earned.

7/11 Don Jr. "I love it" e-mail revealed



7/23 *GLOW*

► An under-the-radar Netflix hit from *Weeds* and *Orange Is the New Black* creator Jenji Kohan. Alison Brie, new fave Betty Gilpin (in '80s spandex leotards), and Marc Maron (in '80s Björn Borg polos and Terry Richardson glasses) are all awesome in this series about professionally fake lady wrestling.

7/21 Sean Spicer resigns



7/28 *Atomic Blonde*

► The trash masterpiece of the year stars reigning World's Best Action Hero Charlize Theron. It's a pulpy spy thriller filled with insane action sequences, gleeful performances, and an extravagantly unnecessary sex scene between Theron and Sofia Boutella. (See page 154).

AUGUST

7/31 Scaramucci fired



8/15 Trump's "both sides" defense of white supremacists



8/4 *Detroit*

► Kathryn Bigelow's follow-up to *Zero Dark Thirty* covers the 12th Street race riot of 1967 and ensuing standoff between wrongly accused motel guests and a clique of murderous cops. The film paralleled the present so gut-droppingly that it's hard to watch. Do it anyway.

THREE THINGS COMEDIAN TIFFANY HADDISH IS WORRIED YOU MISSED

1. Dave Chappelle: *The Age of Spin*

Oh, my goodness, I laughed so hard at him talking about all the times he met O. J. Simpson. "The first time I met O.J...."

2. *The Big Sick*

That movie was one of my faves 'cause I felt I could really relate to the whole stress of dating. Like, he had an air mattress, and she still was like, "You know what? I'm here. Might as well get it in while I can." How many times have I been that girl that's like, "I don't care if his mattress is on the floor. It's not always about what the man has—it's about his soul."

3. *War for the Planet of the Apes*

Is this a modern-day version of *Roots*? I don't know! But whatever it is, I'm gonna remember this forever.



SEPTEMBER

9/6 Debt-ceiling deal with Chuck and Nancy



9/19 Trump calls Kim Jong-un "Rocket Man" in a U.N. address



9/22 Mike Judge Presents: Tales from the Tour Bus (Cinemax)

The creator of *Silicon Valley* (and *Beavis & Butt-head* and *Office Space*) chronicles the screwups, affairs, and gunfights of some of the greatest musicians in this mostly animated show. (Did we mention how many shootings there are? Judge introduces Billy Joe Shaver by saying, "Like almost everyone else in this series so far, he shot a guy.") Enjoy the entourages of degenerate geniuses like George Jones and Jerry Lee Lewis spilling the tea. (Yes, Judge talks to Lewis's 13-year-old cousin-bride.)



9/24 Trump attacks NFL protesters

9/29 Big Mouth (Netflix)
Nick Kroll's new show pulls off the impossible: making an animated series (Chuh) about puberty (uh boy) in which the characters are controlled by hormone monsters (uh-huuuh) that is hilarious and actually for adults. We swear. Kroll and his *Oh, Hello* co-star, John Mulaney, are joined by Fred Armisen, Maya Rudolph, Jenny Slate, and Jordan Peele, who voices the ghost of Duke Ellington. You're just going to have to trust us on this one.

THREE THINGS COMEDIAN NICK KROLL IS WORRIED YOU MISSED

1. *Good Time*

A crazy, funny, adrenaline-packed bank-robery-gone-awry committed by two idiot brothers, in a film directed by two non-idiot brothers (the Safdies). I finished the movie and felt like I had smoked coke laced with LSD. (In a good way!)

2. *CTRL* (SZA)

This album is honest, sexy, and groovy AF—real solid make-out music. SZA's voice is hypnotic and beautiful, and "Doves in the Wind," with Kendrick Lamar, is one of my favorite tracks of the year.

3. *Fargo* season three (FX)

David Thewlis's VM Varga is the best bad-guy character I've ever seen on television. Also, you don't need to have watched season one or two for season three to make sense. AND Ewan McGregor plays (basically) twin brothers, and one of them is like 30 pounds heavier!

OCTOBER

10/3 Trump throws paper towels to hurricane survivors

10/6 *The Florida Project*

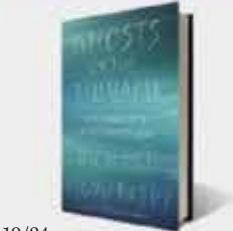
Sean Baker's film cross-sections a seedy Orlando motel and displays its occupants, including beleaguered manager Willem Dafoe and the borderline-feral children of his tenants.

10/10 Trump proposes IQ face-off with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson

10/13 *MASSEDUCTION*
St. Vincent

Annie Clark does avant-garde pop on the new album, collaborating on the single "Pills" with Jack Antonoff, Max Martin's heir apparent as supreme hitmaker. The breakup record of the year is full of singularly energetic regret—Clark's ex, model and actress Cara Delevingne, is all over the lyrics. (Not to mention singing back vocals on "Pills.")

10/18 Trump: "He knew what he signed up for"

10/24 *Ghosts of the Tsunami: Death and Life in Japan's Disaster Zone*
by Richard Lloyd Parry

From the author of one of the best true-crime books of the past decade (*People Who Eat Darkness*) comes a portrait of the 2011 earthquake—and ensuing tsunami—in Japan. Parry finds haunted humanity in tragedy and in how the country reckons with its disaster-prone history.

*Fake News

NOVEMBER

11/1 Photos of Stephen Miller in Nazi Halloween costume leaked*

11/3 *Lady Bird*

Greta Gerwig's directorial debut, about a high school senior on the cusp of escaping Sacramento and childhood, is as winning as its creator.

11/8 Trump holds Election Day—victory anniversary party*

11/10 *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*

A bleakly hilarious Martin McDonagh movie in which Frances McDormand seeks justice for the murder of her daughter, starting with a billboard calling out the terminally ill police chief (Woody Harrelson) for not doing enough to catch the killer.

11/17 Trump fires Miller*

December
The Beautiful & Damned
G-Eazy

Armed with the buzziest stars around—his rumored girlfriend, Halsey; the chart-topping rapper and insta-icon Cardi B; R&B's hottest commodity, Kehlani; and New York's A\$AP Rocky—the Bay Area rapper G-Eazy delivers an album of bangers.

12/1 Pee tape released*

12/1 *The Disaster Artist*

James Franco stars with Dave Franco in a movie about the worst movie ever made. (They will love it if the release of the pee tape coincides with their opening.)



12/25 Trump attempts to cancel NBA Christmas games*

12/25 NBA Christmas games

You're allowed to watch the Cavs and Warriors even if the prez says you can't.



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Designer of the Year



Louis Vuitton's lead menswear designer, **KIM JONES**, has breathed extraordinary new energy into the venerated brand—and, in 2017, pulled off one of the collaborations of the century, too. But can he keep up with the hype?

MARK
ANTHONY
GREEN

SIX OR SO years ago, there was a major shift in the capital-F fashion world. The skaters and sneakerheads and rappers and stoop kids became the nucleus of the industry. Sure, streetwear has always been “cool.” But this shift promoted streetwear, permanently infusing it into the DNA. Not only were these kids now invited to the runway shows; they were invited into the ateliers. They weren’t just the inspiration—

GROOMING: MAGALIE MARKAN AT B AGENCY. HAIR: DAMIEN BOURNIQUE AT LE CIGARE À MOUSTACHE.



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Designer of the Year



▲ The LV x Supreme collaboration, masterminded by Jones, was the unexpected fashion coup of 2017.

they became the brain trust. Poor Parisian cobblers were forced to learn how to make sneakers. *Blasphème!* And everyone, even the snootiest fashion houses, started to chase brands like Supreme, which design with culture more than with color or fabric. Virgil Abloh became an entire generation's most aspirational figure. A\$AP Rocky became the new, even prettier Kate Moss. And nearest the center of the Venn diagram, British designer Kim Jones took over as men's artistic director at Louis Vuitton.

Kim tried to start this movement almost two decades ago, when he created his namesake line. It comprised street items made with hyper-luxe fabrics, mostly constructed in Japan. "I still see people when I go to Japan and they'll come up to me with an old piece of 'Kim Jones,'" Kim says. Some even ask him to sign it, which you can visibly see makes him feel bashful in ways only a British man can feel. "Maybe I'll re-release the pieces someday," he teases.

If that were to happen, the only release that would have longer lines would be his Supreme x Louis Vuitton collaboration—which was one of the biggest collaborations in fashion history. (That's not a hyperbolic statement. Numbers support it. It's an appropriate amount of -bolic.) The partnership was something that only Kim could have pulled off, even if he barely owns any of the collection himself. "I just gave away my last thing, a hoodie, to Naomi [Campbell]," he said. "It looks better on her, anyway."

Kim's genius has always been paired with mystery. He claims to be a boring person. But you hear things. You hear that he's funny. And a prankster. And an actual interesting, soulful human being—which is an endangered species in the fashion world. There's still a sneaker-obsessed 23-year-old



kid in me, the kid who started at GQ the same time Kim started at LV. And that guy—me—wanted to know if the rumors were true: if the patron saint of street fashion, the man who helped create this lane for all of us, was, ya know, *real*. So inside his office at Louis Vuitton's world headquarters in Paris, I poked at the designer to see if I could get to the man.

GQ: The Supreme collaboration seems like the sort of thing kids would pray for but would never happen. It still doesn't seem real.

KIM JONES: I think it was about a year we were sort of working on it. The Supreme guys are super nice, and I speak to James [Jebbia, founder of Supreme] quite a bit, even if it's just by a text. We knew it was just really the right time. It worked. It was for the right reason. You read these hypebeast things and stuff, where people just constantly slag things off. Nine times out of ten, when people say something bad, it's because they're jealous.

The rumor is that Supreme and LV aren't on good terms after everything. That's not true at all. I just don't think anyone anticipated how big the queues would be. But everyone was happy with it.

Does your shyness ever conflict with you having to be a good leader? Not really. I was always called the ringleader at school, so it's quite appropriate to be head of a team. I'm very left alone here. I can do what I want, and I do it when and how I want to do it, because obviously it works, so you get left to do it. I've had other jobs where bosses are always on your back, but with this one you're very free.

► THE BEST & WORST MOVES OF 2017

Fashion Swerved Extra Hard

Now's a good time to ask: Did fashion take a step forward this year? Or did it jump the shark? For your consideration, GQ editors argue point-counterpoint on the stylistic legacy of the past 12 months.

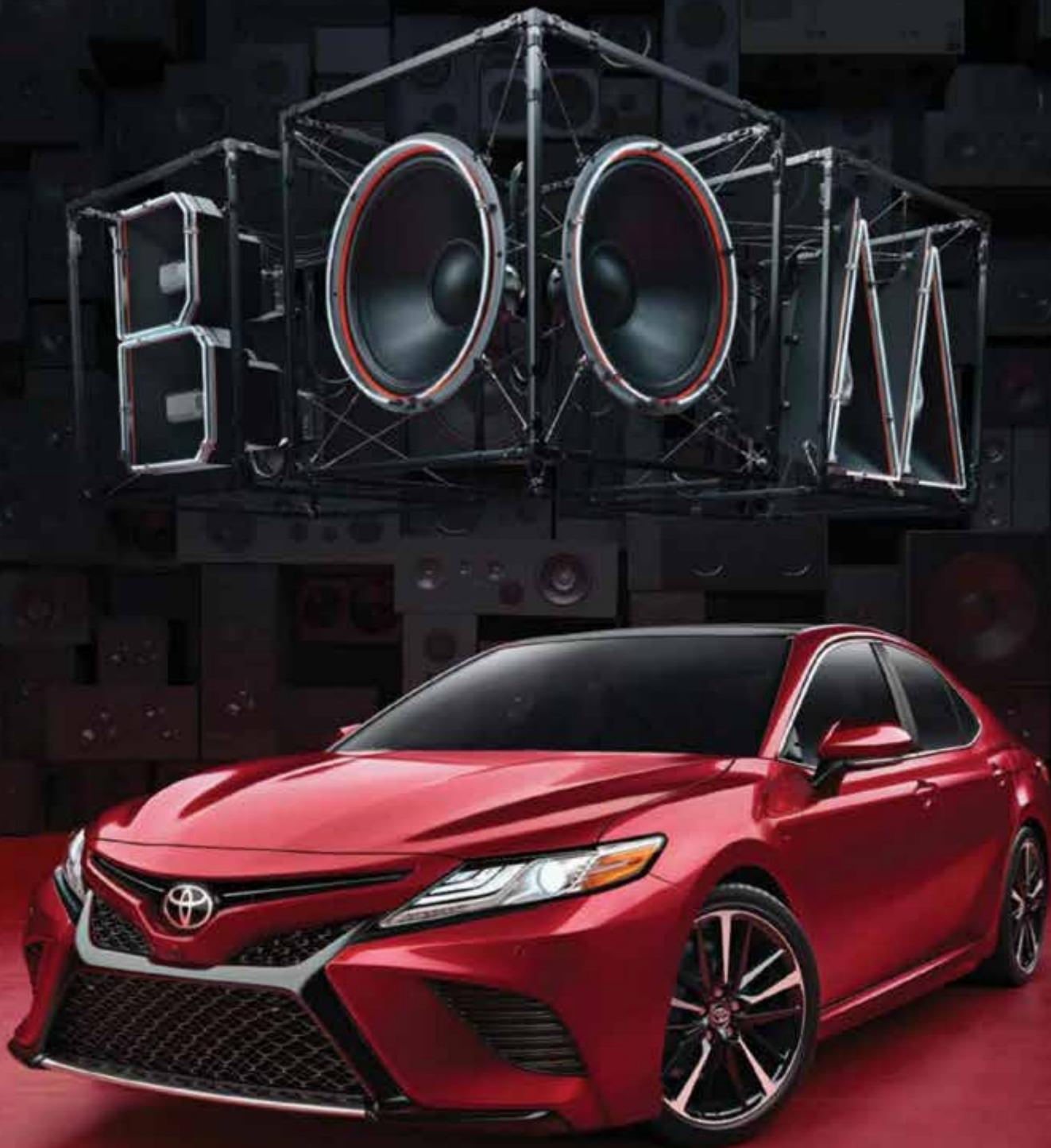


The Great Hollywood Stylist Boom means that every red-carpet look is on point—and exactly the same. That is, until **Donald Glover** broke the mold at the Golden Globes with a brown velvet Gucci suit and a huge bow tie.—MATT SEBRA



Prince George, the 4-year-old British heir, seems like a cool kid. Cute cheeks, good hair, solid parents. He's been known to wear a romper. But you shouldn't dress like a royal toddler. Let's leave the male romper in 2017.—SAM SCHUBE

The All-New
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Let's
Go
Places

Designer of the Year



What's the worst job you've ever had?

Washing out dishes. To buy some Jordans. You know, I've done every shit job you can think of and every good job you can think of.

Worst date you've ever been on.

You know, it's funny, I haven't really been on dates. I got taken to Nando's once. But I don't think I've been on a bad date, to be honest. I don't really go on dates.

If someone wanted to get your attention, what would be the best way to go about it? A lot of people do try, and I'm not going to say how, because then more people will try. I'm quite happy.

Do you want kids?

No. I've got dogs.

I've heard you're an animal-lover—what's your spirit animal?

If I was going to be an animal, I'd be an eagle, because it's got the least amount of predators.

Why wouldn't you want to be, like, a lion? You could be king of the jungle and have no predators.

Yeah, but they still have, like, a really difficult life. Eagles can just, like, sit on top of the tree and look at everything.

Let's talk zombies. Let's say there's a zombie apocalypse and you could only have four friends to help you survive—who would they be?

Ah, that's so funny because I'm obsessed with zombies. Both of my houses are zombie-proof.

Zombie-proof?

Not on purpose. It's just, like, one you can't get into for love nor money, and the other one has shutters on every window

that lock it down. So I guess it's quite zombie-proof. Kate [Moss] would be pretty good in a zombie apocalypse.

Why?

Because she's tough and she knows how to bargain with people. Fran [Cutler], for sure. She could get her way out of anything.

Are you a romantic?

Uh...I can be.

Are you more often a romantic or more often not a romantic?

I'm not a daydreamer or anything. I just get on with things. I'm practical. I have a very logical mind, and that's how I go through life, I guess. I would say I'm romantic. I'm kind to my friends and to the people that I love, and it's like... I like to surprise them.

Are you a control freak?

Not so much. I like the people I work with, and I like to have autonomy because otherwise I think they get bored. I like to give people freedom, because then you get different results. Listening to people is as important as telling people what to do.

► THE BEST & WORST MOVES OF 2017

Beards Can Liberate! Or Entrap!

There's a line between hirsute self-expression and hubris, between becoming an Internet meme and getting arrested by the authorities.—BENJY HANSEN-BUNDY

"There's a bundle of emotional manifestations with the beard that I have not yet been able to fully examine," David Letterman told GQ's Brett Martin in May. "Whenever I happen to see a picture of myself, I think, 'Oh yeah, that's the guy you want to be.'"

There was only one thing alleged Dark Web kingpin Gal Vallerius apparently loved more than selling OxyContin: beard competitions. So when the Frenchman flew to the U.S. for the World Beard Championships, the feds nabbed him. Beard would've won, too!

And I think that's the number one thing that I learned years ago. And it's always something that helped people.

When was the last time you cried?

Probably two days ago.

Why?

I think I was just overtired and emotional. I was actually crying from laughing at the beginning, and then my friend and I got really sad because we were talking about someone who died.

Do you cry often?

No, not very much at all, actually. I don't know when I last cried before that.

You and Alexander McQueen were pretty close, right?

Yeah, we were really good friends. I mean, he was like an older brother to me in a sense. I met him a couple years out of college. He had a really good sense of humor, and he also loved animals, so we'd talk about that and drive around in his car listening to Shalamar. He didn't even have a driver's license.

Where were you when you found out he had committed suicide?

I was actually with Kate, and we knocked on his door the night before he did it. But he didn't answer. So...it was a bit of a weird one, because it was Tim Blanks that called me and asked me to do a press thing. I just couldn't believe it. I cried for about three days.

You have the dream job. What is your dream retirement age?

Quite soon.

You're only 38!

Yeah. Um...in about five years.

Bullshit!

Why?

You'll retire before you're 45?

I would like to. And do something else.

What would you want to do?

Conservation. There's lots of stuff you can do. Life doesn't have to be one thing, does it?

So we may have only like five years left of Kim Jones's clothes?

Well, I don't know yet. I don't plan things, but I want to become self-sufficient. It's kind of nice to not have to get to the office every day. That's the thing I think of. It's different, isn't it?

MARK ANTHONY GREEN is GQ's style editor.

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Gorge Yourself on the New Nostalgia

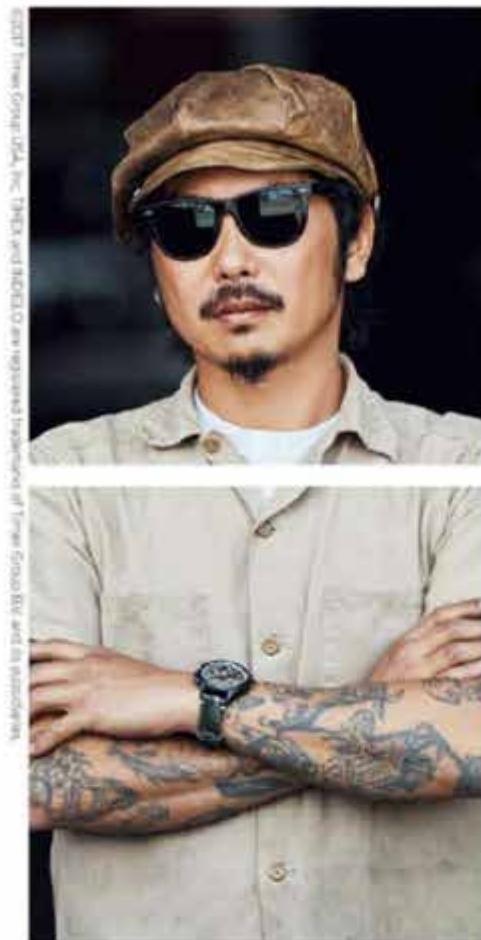
Restaurant
of the Year

The chefs behind
Parm, Carbone,
and Dirty French
open a pair of
showstoppers—
The Grill and
The Pool—in the
most venerated
restaurant space
in New York City
■ BRETT MARTIN



SOME NEW RESTAURANTS you can encounter and assess with dispassionate objectivity. Some you've been waiting to go to your whole life.

I'm being literal. In the early 1980s, for their wedding anniversary, my parents went to The Four Seasons



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▲ The Pool, run by chef Rich Torrisi, counters the retro decor of the dining room (today, *left*, and in 1959) with a modern menu of mostly seafood.

for dinner. This was a big deal in our house. They had been once before, soon after getting married in 1965. My mother's salary then, as a newly minted New York City public-school teacher assigned to an elementary school in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, was \$5,300 before taxes; my father, variously a cabdriver, optician, civil servant, and eventually CPA, could not have earned much more. Luckily, the pre-theater prix fixe menu was \$16.95, a number that nevertheless required, if not scrimping, then at least a deep breath at a time when the fried-shrimp dinner at Lundy Bros., closer to home in Sheepshead Bay, cost a mere three bucks.

The return visit to The Four Seasons was the subject of anticipatory discussion for months and great excitement when the day finally arrived. I've never entirely shaken the glow that the name of the restaurant took on. Throughout my childhood, I would occasionally take out the slender matchbook they had brought home and stuffed in a drawer, running a finger over the famous logo of four trees in spring, summer, autumn, and winter. And whenever my brother or I would misbehave or commit a table faux pas, it would elicit the same withering response from my parents: "You are not ready for The Four Seasons."

It was a decade or so before I finally made it through the doors of the Seagram Building, up Philip Johnson's famous staircase and into The Four Seasons for the first time. It was a party—I can't recall what for, except that the Yankees were all there. I remember Paul O'Neill, in one of those abominable melted-ice-cream Cosby sweatshirts popular among white ballplayers in the late '90s, standing like an overgrown kid near the buffet, his plate stacked high with crab legs. In awe, I wandered back and forth between the walnut-paneled Grill Room and the Pool Room, with its bubbling marble bath. I gazed up at the Richard Lippold sculpture of brass rods, suspended over the bar. I surreptitiously fingered the famous window treatments, ascending curtains of rippling beads, slung like jewelry across a

belly dancer's midriff. More than a few of these circuits included stops at the open bar. At one point, holding a heavy rocks glass filled with whiskey, I turned a corner into the hallway that connected the two dining rooms and walked directly into Joe Torre. The glass slipped out of my hand and hit the floor at his feet, exploding like a grenade. By the time I looked up, Torre had fled and a team of servers had swooped in with towels and brooms. I stood there alone, watching them sweep, the awful knowledge coursing through me: I Was. Not. Ready.

I relate these stories to make the point that if you are a New Yorker of any long standing, The Four Seasons was likely to occupy some part of your psychic landscape—even if your version of New York was many physical and metaphorical miles from the one to which the restaurant once acted as a de facto canteen. *Was* because The Four Seasons technically ceased operations in the Seagram Building in July 2016, replaced this May by two new restaurants in the same space. Appropriately, if un-Google-ably, they are named The Pool and The Grill. The owners of The Four Seasons name plan to open their own new version a few blocks away, but until proven otherwise, it's the space, not the moniker, that holds the magic.

Even so, there haven't been many points in the past two decades when goings-on in the Seagram Building would have been considered big dining-world news, much less the restaurant story of the year. One more memory I have is of being at *Food & Wine*'s Best New Chefs awards, in 2007, the same day, coincidentally, that Frank Bruni had reviewed The Four Seasons for *The New York Times*, cutting the place's rating from three stars to two. Pete Wells, then the *Times*'s dining editor, was there, and we were talking about what could possibly make the restaurant relevant again. A younger chef, maybe? "What about *him*?" Pete said, pointing across the room to where David Chang was gloomily plating an endless number of the pork buns that had won him his own Best New Chef award the previous year. We imagined koji-spiked vichyssoise,

bao buns stuffed with duck à l'orange. And then we laughed and laughed. Because in the spring of 2007, what could've been more ridiculous? The Revolution of the Line Cooks was well under way, with chefs fleeing everything The Four Seasons represented. They were stripping down, shedding dining-room conventions, shedding dining rooms altogether. The whole food world was getting younger, looser, more polyglot, farther downtown. To take a job like chef at The Four Seasons—in the fantastical case that it would even be offered—would be to disappear forever.

Ten years later, the narrative shows signs of once again being turned on its

► THE WORST MOVES OF 2017

And the Oscar Goes to...

*After a series of screwups, the Oscar for best picture briefly went to *La La Land*, not the rightful winner, *Moonlight*. Previous six-time Academy Awards envelope designer Marc Friedland (2011–16) explains what went wrong.* —BRENNAN CARLEY



1. The card got stuck in the envelope. "You have to wax the edges."
2. The font color was too similar to the paper. "You need black on ecru."
3. The lighting was too bright. "They used reflective gold foil for the font."
4. The font was too small. "The movie's name was larger than the winner's."
5. They had the wrong f#%king envelope!

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head. The Grill and The Pool are operated by Rich Torrisi and Mario Carbone, two fine-dining refugees who opened a tiny Italian-sandwich shop in SoHo and used it to launch an empire that has now stormed back uptown. It's hard not to see this as either the Revolution's final, capping victory or its Prince Hal-like betrayal.

One thing for sure is that The Grill and The Pool represent the apotheosis of what I think of as the New Nostalgia: a notable pendulum swing back toward the traditional rituals and comforts of fine dining. You see it 60 blocks south of The Grill and The Pool, at Le Coucou, which dares to propose that a French restaurant can be more formal than a bistro or brasserie and still hip; at the newest incarnation of the Beatrice Inn, where you can spend more than \$700 on a whiskey-aged tomahawk steak; at 4 Charles Prime Rib; and at Minetta Tavern, which kicked off this counter-strain almost a decade ago.

These places reanimate the notion of dining out as a special occasion, replete with candles, tableside preparation, even—imagine!—tablecloths. Maybe it's the first wave of revolutionaries aging and finding themselves craving the kinds of nights out their parents once had. Maybe it's the desire for a deeper coddling in anxious times. Maybe we just realized we still need someplace to go on Valentine's Day.

I SPENT MORE ON TWO GIBSONS—prebatched and washed with pickled-onion brine—while waiting for my party at The Grill this summer than my parents did on their entire first meal at The Four Seasons. That shouldn't be too surprising, and not just for reasons of inflation. In addition to the building's pedigree and the baseline insanity of what it costs to eat out in New York, Torrisi, Carbone, and their partner, Jeff Zalaznick, have long established themselves as breathtakingly bold upsellers. It took me an inordinate amount of time to realize the trio's company name, Major Food Group, was a pun, in part because the braggadocio seemed so on-brand. With the exception of its casual sandwich shop, Parm, the group's restaurants—Carbone, Santina, ZZ's Clam Bar, Dirty French, and Sadelle's—operate on the principle that, for a surprising number of people, the chance to drain one's pockets is a value-added proposition. Las Vegas has, of course, known this for a long time. When the boys opened a branch of Carbone in Vegas itself, I worried briefly that they might be giving the game away. (They seem to be surviving just fine.)

There have been times I've found the gouging obnoxious, and other times when I've reminded myself that New Yorkers who want to spend stupid amounts of money on dinner will certainly find a way to do so with

► THE WORST MOVES OF 2017

Twitter Gets Wordy

In September, Twitter announced that it would test 280-character tweets, doubling its famous 140-character limit.



Drew Magary

@drewmagary

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Great, now Twitter has gotten rid of its only redeeming feature: brevity. Brevity was the whole point! You make your point and then GTFO. You don't just go on and on and on and on. And on and on! You're to the point. Concise. It's important to be concise. And another thing... 1/27

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or without the help of Major Food Group. In nearly every case, they'll get worse food for their trouble. The group may glorify an old-fashioned, elitist clubbiness (not to say cultivate a new-fashioned douchiness), but there's never any doubt that Torrisi and Carbone are real chefs or that they're working from a place of genuine respect and affection for ingredients, service, and restaurant history.

And in the Seagram Building, they have spaces that, for once, render the question of upsell moot. Put it this way: If you were to charge me an equivalent premium—say, \$35—for a hot dog, but I got to eat it ensconced in the luster of The Grill, or beneath the huge Calder mobile slowly rotating over The Pool's bubbling tub—I'd probably say: "Yeah, seems fair."

Don't misunderstand: The Grill and The Pool are still monuments to conspicuous wealth and luxury. There is no shortage of "while Rome burned" tableaux on which to seize, starting with the thousand Swords of Damocles literally dangling over the swells at the bar, in the form of Lippold's rods; if you're in a revolutionary frame of mind, they look like a phalanx of arrows arrested, *Matrix*-style, midflight, on their way to strike deep into the heart of capitalism. For what it's worth, The Grill is the only restaurant I've been to this year at which I seriously worried that Donald Trump might show up.

Still, there was a reason my mother and father—whose own first-generation parents would never have dreamed of taking seats, however temporary, among the beau monde—chose The Four Seasons for their foray into Manhattan dining, instead of Le Pavillon, or Lutèce, or any of the other formidable Frenchies that made up the top of the Manhattan food chain in those days. Joe Baum, the visionary leader of Restaurant Associates, which built the restaurant in 1959, explicitly wanted it to be a spectacle

understood by all—and an *American* one at that. (The menu was very deliberately written in English rather than French.) The Four Seasons may never have been populist, but its Kennedy-esque aspirational vision was open to all.

And there's more here to fetishize than *Mad Men* power dynamics—of which it's worth pointing out that *Mad Men* was itself a critique. The Grill is a menu historian's fever dream. There's a long buffet table, festooned with elaborate decorative centerpieces, that feels like it came out of a 1960s-era Time-Life book. It's laden with reclaimed relics like anchovies on toast, clam cocktail, gleaming silver bowls of crudité on crushed ice. I could eat like this forever. Weirder, colder, fustier! Bring me jellied consommé! Cottage cheese! A glass of tomato juice! Aspic! Aspic! ASPIC!

Guéridons swarm the floor like cars at a demolition derby, bearing Dover sole, game birds, pepper-crusted ruby-hued slabs of prime rib. Meat is the currency of the New Nostalgia—in the form of either whole animals (chickens, ducks, rabbits) or cuts big, expensive, and beefy. If the Revolution was built on shimmering cubes of pork fat—the knowledge of which had apparently been lost in the dark time known as the Other White Meat Era—the flesh of the moment is good old-fashioned steer. Prime rib is its emblematic cut: at once stolid and ceremonial, decadent and dad-approved. The Oldsmobile of meats.

There is, of course, a paradox built into the New Nostalgia: Part of what it taps into is a yearning for a time when food simply didn't matter so much, when one could just eat without the exhausting business of knowing everything—about chef comingings and goings, ingredients, trends, carbon footprints, all of it. It was once a mark of status for The Four Seasons Power-Lunchers to ostentatiously (*continued on page 185*)

A TASTE
THAT
SHINES
BRIGHTER.

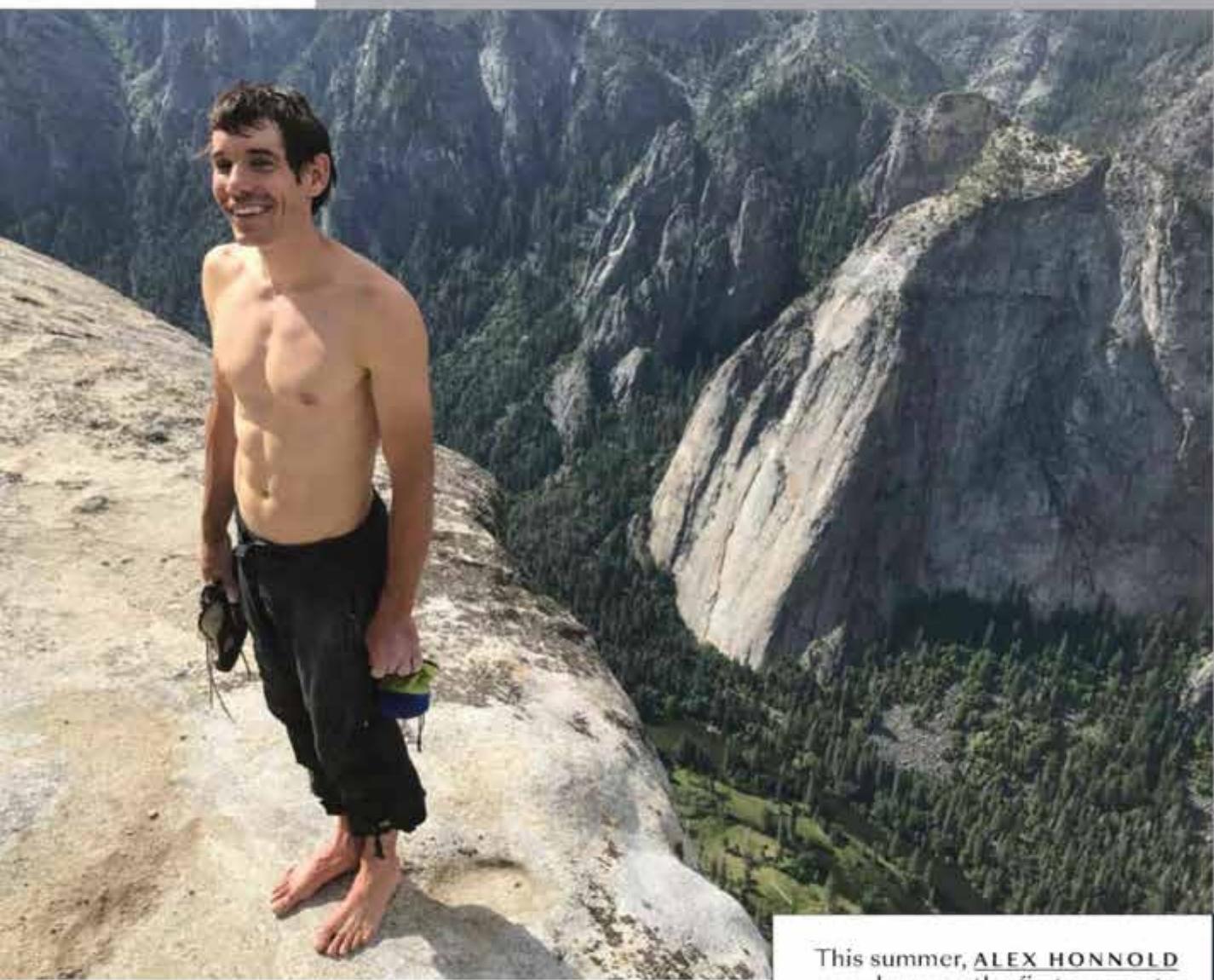
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Profiles in Courage

Rock God

Nothing like starting your day by breezing through a climb that takes most people four days to do.



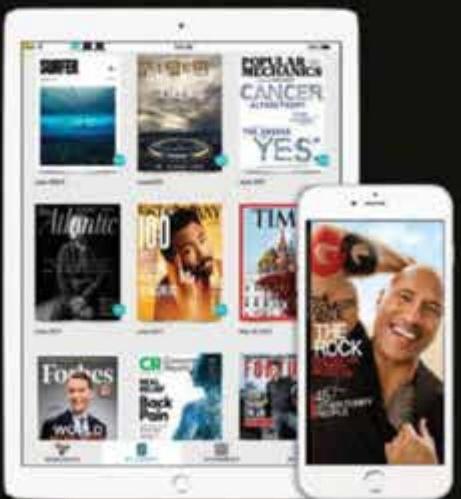
NONE OF MY FRIENDS really wanted to talk about the solo. Pretty much everyone thought it was a bad idea. But I'd been thinking about it basically since I soloed Half Dome [in 2008]. It's the obvious next step. If you're in Yosemite, you look at Half Dome on one end of the valley and El Capitan on the other—they're the two formations that matter. Every year I looked at it and thought, "Oh, it's still too hard. I'm not strong enough yet." I realized that it was never just going to happen. I would have to put a bunch of work into it, and so I finally just did.

I arrived in Yosemite in late April, and from then until I did the climb in June, I only left once. I stopped responding to e-mails. The

This summer, **ALEX HONNOLD** became the first person to climb Yosemite's legendary El Capitan without a rope, ascending 3,000 feet with nothing to catch him if he fell. Honnold walks us through how he pulled off such an audacious feat, and what ran through his mind as he climbed, clung, and even karate-kicked his way to the top ■ **AS TOLD TO TIM SOHN**

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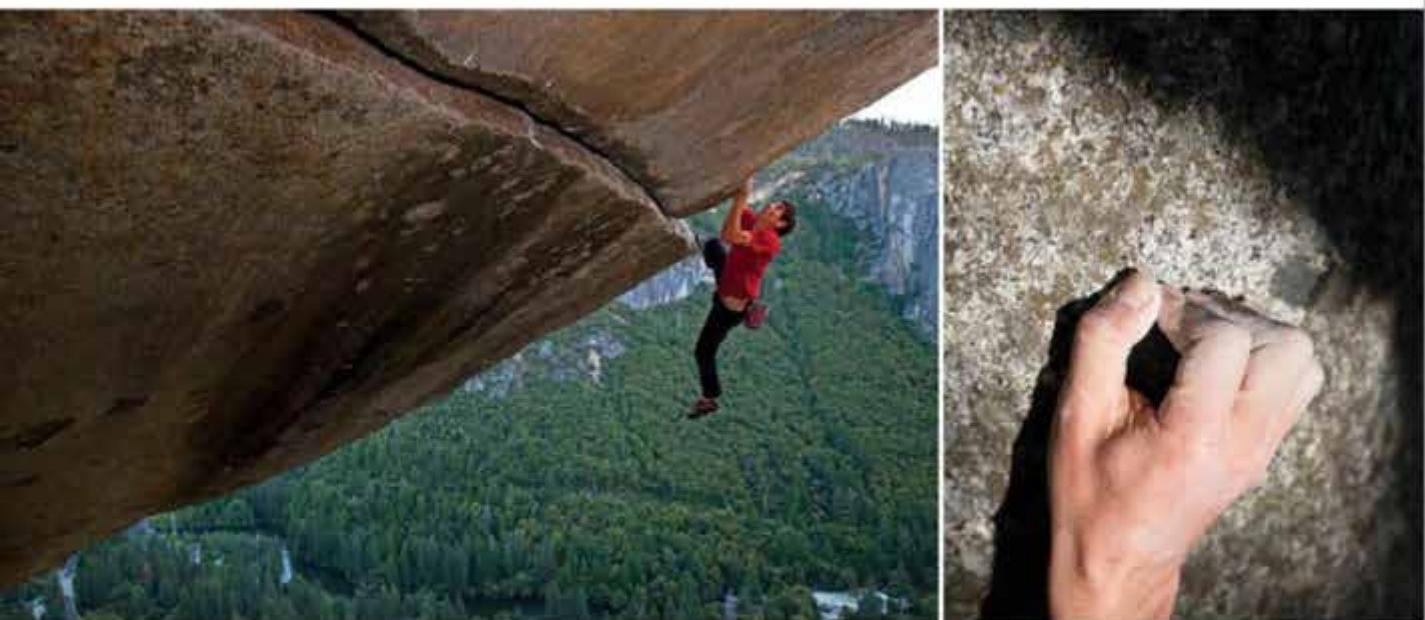


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▲ Honnold doing his best *Mission: Impossible 2* Tom Cruise impression in Yosemite.

main thing for me was to have unstructured time, where I had nothing going on and I could just sit in my chair in the van and naturally start to think about the things that matter on the route.

Climbing's always been a lifestyle thing, where you just putz around and do stuff when you can. I'd never trained in a systematic way before. It was a nice opportunity to be, like, a real athlete. Because I was the first person working on that route this year, we did a bunch of routine gardening where bushes had sprouted in handholds. That's sort of the unglamorous side—making something secure enough to solo it. Anyone who was around saw me up on the Freerider *a lot*, maybe 15 to 20 days total, climbing the lower section and rappelling the upper part. I memorized five or six pitches in their entirety, and then tons of little sequences here and there.

About a week before the climb, my girlfriend left to give me more space. The day before the climb, I went for a hike with my mom and some of her friends who happened to be coming through the valley that day, and I did some light bouldering, just to break in my good shoes again. That night, I slept in my van on my friend's driveway. I'd pre-rigged my breakfast bowl—muesli with fruit, hemp milk, and chia seeds—and my bag was already packed. Everything was done, so in the morning I could roll out of bed and just execute. It was a ten-minute drive to the parking lot. I started climbing at about 5:30 A.M.

WITHIN THE FIRST HOUR of climbing, I passed eight people, all still in bed. After that, there was nobody. At the start, I didn't really feel heroic, exactly. I had been doing so much climbing that I was slightly

tired. But I wanted to show up like that, like it was a normal day of climbing.

I'd cached a liter of water and a couple of energy bars on the route in two places. Over the whole route, for four hours, I stopped maybe six times total for a couple of minutes each. I was wearing tight high-performance shoes, so it was mostly tightening and loosening them or popping them off.

The crux of the route, called the Boulder Problem, is about 1,800 feet off the valley floor. There are about ten moves on it, and

the holds are small and far apart. Only one of them is something you can pull down on. When everything's facing sideways, if your foot slips or if anything happens, you're shooting off the rock face—no matter how hard you're holding on. It's what makes the Boulder Problem so tough. And then the crux of the crux involves this crazy karate kick into this corner, which requires a high degree of flexibility and precision, because you're kicking at mid-chest height way out to the side, and once your foot's over there you have to bring your hand over. It's just an outrageous sequence.

The crux was one of the only parts that I was stressed about, but then I just did it perfectly. I never thought about falling at all.

I took two more little rests above the crux, and that's when I appreciated the view. I was past hardest part and feeling totally heroic. Near the top, I sped up because I wanted to break four hours. For the top 200 feet, I was racing Jimmy Chin to the summit. He'd been filming [for *Solo*, a film about the climb, coming out in 2018] for National Geographic, so I gave him a little head start, just enough time to get to the summit ahead of me, and then I popped up right behind him and we were all just partying on top. Pretty lovely.

I spent maybe an hour or so on top. There were a lot of hugs and group pictures. And then, because that side of El Cap doesn't really have cell service, I was sort of anxious to mosey to the other side. I called my girlfriend, called my mom. At the bottom, I went back to my van and did a hangboard workout, which seems weird. But it was something I'd been doing every other day, and this was my other day.

TIM SOHN is a writer based in New York.

► THE WORST MOVES OF 2017

The Falcons Blow the Bowl

How unlikely was the Patriots' comeback? We asked a Vegas oddsmaker.—JAY WILLIS

According to Caesars Palace sports-book director Frank Kunovic, 8:31 left in the third quarter is the exact moment you should have placed your bet against the Falcons. "When the score was 28–3, I saw odds of the Patriots winning outright between 25 and 30 to 1," he said. "A lot of people took that bet. The books didn't do so well on that one."

THAT WATCH



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Aaron Judge Is Just Getting Started

HE'S AN AFFRONT to baseball's lovefest with advanced metrics. Because no matter what esoteric stat you conjure up to measure Aaron Judge's raw power—bat speed, exit velocity, jaws dropped, pissed-off pitchers—none accurately reflect the experience of having watched the 25-year-old Yankees sensation on his rookie rampage this past season. Day after day, The Judge would uncoil his NBA-size, six-foot-seven, 282-pound body and, in a terrifying blur of lumber, turn baseballs into space debris. ►►

He hit more home runs—and hit them harder—than any rookie in MLB history. He made the Yankees a team to root...for?

And he's turning baseball back into what it hasn't been for years: must-watch TV

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▲ Along with emerging as one of the game's great young hitters, Aaron Judge turned the Yankees back into title contenders.

But Aaron Judge's true power? He's making baseball relevant again. In the Internet age, when social media is littered with displays of freakish athleticism from other sports, baseball'suzziest cultural moment of late was a movie with Brad Pitt and Jonah Hill about salary caps. Into this otherwise drowsy moment, enter the young Yankee, infusing the ol' national pastime with the same blink-and-you're-an-idiot urgency that trails Steph Curry and Odell Beckham Jr. When we needed it most, his deep bombs provided a reminder of the primal majesty of the well-struck dinger. In April, the first month of the 2017 season, he hit ten. By the July All-Star break, he'd smashed 30 of them, needing only half a season to best Joe DiMaggio's rookie record. (He won the Home Run Derby that weekend, too, just for fun.) At season's end, the baby-faced batsman had smacked 52—another MLB rookie record.

That brute force—combined with less sexy skills, like, you know, defense—carried an inexperienced Yankees team to the edge of the World Series during a year in which they were supposed to be rebuilding. Even more impossible than that, he made them *likable*. Sports' most hated franchise somehow became the playoffs' endearing underdog, led by a young core of Baby Bombers, with Judge playing the part of the biggest, most endearing baby of all. Already, the Bronx's favorite Large Adult Son has gone a long way toward filling a certain shortstop-sized void that was left in that borough when Derek Jeter and his

gaggle of supermodel girlfriends and his ridiculous jump throws bid the diamond adieu. (Yankee Stadium now features its own Aaron-themed section, The Judge's Chambers, behind Judge in right field.)

So sure, expectations are high. Okay, really high. And maybe that's particularly dangerous for a guy who strikes out as often as Judge: 208 times this season, tied for the sixth highest of all time. But inconsistency is

a small price to pay for potential greatness—especially if it means getting to witness a guy hit a ball like it said bad things about his mom. We can sit here and talk about whether or not his next at-bat ends with a swing and a miss, or a swing and a moon shot, but, in the end, it doesn't really matter. Either way, you'll be watching.

CLAY SKIPPER is a GQ staff writer.

► THE BEST MOVES OF 2017

Free at Last

Three days before Trump was sworn into office, Obama granted clemency to 209 nonviolent offenders. One of them was Deneise Quintanilla.



"I had a life sentence for conspiracy with intent to distribute 500 grams of methamphetamine. The day I found out that I made clemency, I was a nervous wreck. My attorney said, 'Deneise, President Obama signed off on your clemency. You're going home.' From then on, I felt like I was already walking in freedom."

"When I met my daughter the day I was released, I couldn't do nothing but hug her and cry. My daughter had to finally tell me, 'Mom, are we going to stay in this parking lot, or are you going to stop crying?' We stopped at IHOP and I ordered a spinach omelet, and this omelet is covering the whole plate. I'm used to these little, small portions!"

"Then we went to the mall, and there was so many beautiful things...I just kept on touching everything. It was all just so soft to me, because the clothes we got in prison were real rough."

"I think the hardest part was to stop asking permission—you can't just take off in prison. My daughter says, 'Mom, you don't have to ask. Just go to the bathroom!'" —AS TOLD TO LUISA ROLLENHAGEN

The Un-Quiet American

▼
Spymaster



As director of national intelligence, **JAMES CLAPPER** was charged with protecting America's secrets. But now he's unwilling to keep silent—speaking out about Russia's role in our politics and about Donald Trump, whom he calls "downright scary and disturbing"

■ MATTATHIAS SCHWARTZ

JAMES CLAPPER met Donald Trump for the first time on the morning of January 6, in a conference room at Trump Tower. Clapper, a retired three-star general, grew up in a military family and volunteered for two tours in Vietnam. Trump got five deferments: four for college, one for bone spurs. Clapper avoids scrutiny. Among his staff, he earned the nickname Grumpy Cat for his habit of scrunching up his weathered face during interviews and congressional hearings. Trump has a face optimized for broadcast, a Kabuki mask of synthetic emotion. He would hardly exist were it not for television. Despite these differences, the two men seemed to hit it off. There was no hint of how Trump would behave over the months that followed, diminishing both his office and his country to the point that Clapper would do something drastic, something that he never believed he would do—condemn a sitting president. Clapper remembers Trump at

that first meeting as friendly and solicitous, flattering him with compliments. As Obama's director of national intelligence, Clapper had been tasked with investigating the role that Russia might have played in Trump's victory. He'd come to Trump Tower, with a group that included then FBI director James Comey, to brief the president-elect on the intelligence community's findings: that Vladimir Putin had attempted to intervene in the election, and in Trump's favor. At the time, Trump seemed to take the news well. "It was a professional exchange," Clapper told me.

As the meeting wrapped up, Comey stayed behind to share with Trump a bit more. He explained that a "dossier" full of salacious allegations linking Trump to Russia had been circulating widely around Washington for some time. "The main point was to warn him that it was out there," Clapper said. Days later, on January 10, BuzzFeed published 35 pages of the dossier. Suddenly, the Donald Trump who'd been so collegial turned into a very different man.

In Trump's mind, there had to be a connection between the January 6 briefing on the dossier and its January 10 publication by BuzzFeed. "Intelligence agencies should never have allowed this fake news to 'leak' into the public," he tweeted. "One last shot at me. Are we living in Nazi Germany?" Later that day, he compared American intelligence agencies to the Gestapo.

Clapper called up Trump to try to work things out. On the phone, according to Clapper, Trump asked him to put out a statement saying that it was bunk. Clapper refused. Without knowing the dossier's sources, there was no way to evaluate it. And at least one element from the document was true, Clapper told me, "the considerable animus Putin had for the Clintons. That we had from other sources."

The feud with the intelligence community got worse after Trump gave a speech at the CIA's Memorial Wall, where more than 100 fallen officers are honored with stars etched into stone. Trump filled the room with supporters and rambled on about the

size of his inaugural crowds. "He kind of used it as a prop," Clapper told me, likening the Memorial Wall to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington.

Clapper's personal breaking point, however, wasn't the Nazi tweet, or the Memorial Wall speech, or even the firing of James Comey, whom he called "a personal friend and hero of mine." Through all that, Clapper did his best to keep silent or, when he could not restrain himself, to at least confine his criticisms of Trump to the issue at hand. Then, in August, Trump held a presidential "rally" in Phoenix in which he blasted out 77 minutes of racist dog whistles to an adoring crowd, equating the removal of Confederate statues with "trying to take away our history and heritage." He sounded more like a segregationist throwback than an

American president. At that point, Clapper had had enough. He went on *CNN Tonight* and said something that no one of his standing has said before or since.

The lead-up came when Don Lemon, the host, asked Clapper about Trump's performance. Clapper said he found it "objectionable," "disturbing," and "downright scary" but "not a surprise."

Then Lemon asked Clapper the critical question: "Are you questioning his fitness?"

The word "fitness," in this context, seemed intended as a reference to the 25th Amendment, which provides a way to remove the president should Congress find him "unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office."

On CNN that night, it was clear that Clapper had made up his mind about Donald Trump's fitness, and he had no hesitation in sharing his opinion.

"Yes, I do," he answered.

No member of the national-security establishment, and few elected officials, had gone so far. "I have my own personal views," said John Brennan, the former CIA director, when I asked him about Trump's fitness. "My preference is to keep those views to myself at this time." No senator has said such a thing, not Bernie Sanders or even Bob Corker, who likened the White House to "an adult day-care center" and suggested to *The New York Times* that Trump might start World War III. But questioning Trump's fitness? "Mr. Corker would not directly answer," the *Times* reported.

Clapper has said that if Trump tries to fire Robert Mueller (left) from his position as special counsel, the move would create a constitutional crisis.



Spymaster

Had Clapper made a strategic error, a misstep in a carefully orchestrated dance to separate an unstable narcissist from the nuclear codes? Or was he the only brave man in a city of sycophants and cowards? When I saw him the day after the CNN interview, at a steak house in suburban Virginia, he seemed to be in mourning for a long career spent at a remove from partisan wrangling.

"I've been a political appointee in both Democratic and Republican administrations," he said, his voice a phlegmy rumble. "Support the commander in chief. That was the first order of business. But this one, you know..." He reached for his coffee, leaned back, took a sip. "It's hard. This is a unique situation. We've never had a president like this before."

THE CLAPPERS LIVE in a well-to-do suburb outside Washington, in a brick house with heavy shutters. Clapper's wife, Susan, a retired NSA administrator, answered the door. Her husband, she said, was at work in the basement. I followed her down a carpeted staircase past some paintings of bald eagles. We found James Clapper sitting at a small round table. He was dressed casually, in sandals, a polo shirt, and board shorts.

He seemed to be transitioning smoothly into the life of an ex-official, what D.C. types call a "former." He now socializes with some of the capital's more august senators, meeting them for lunch and bumping into them with the grandkids behind home plate at Nationals games. He had sworn off his trademark martinis, hit the gym, and lost 20 pounds. He would soon buy a Chevy Camaro. A friend told him that he was having a midlife crisis at age 76.

"Well, this is my man cave," he said, gesturing at a meticulously arranged trophy room with a rolltop desk and two couches. Two glass cases contained a glittering array of polished medals from his time in the Air Force, which he joined in 1963. The far wall had built-in shelves showing off a dim series of objects. Clapper dismissed my interest with a wave of his hand, calling it "various other junk from across the course of my career."

Clapper was one of the first hundred Air Force intelligence officers to go to Vietnam. "I hated the war," Clapper said. "What we were doing to the country—our own country—was bad." For a time, he worked alongside his father, who was the NSA's deputy country chief. Susan gave birth to a daughter while he was overseas. She was 7 months old the first time he saw her.

He stuck with the Air Force after his tours, was promoted "below the zone"—before almost all of his contemporaries—and went on to a career in military intelligence, eventually leading the Defense Intelligence Agency and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency. In the years after the September 11

attacks, he clashed with Donald Rumsfeld over how to re-organize the country's spying apparatus, which today consumes roughly \$70 billion a year. Rumsfeld won the argument and fired Clapper, but it wasn't long before he himself was out of a job. Clapper's willingness to stand his ground impressed Rumsfeld's replacement, Bob Gates, who recommended him to Obama as director of national intelligence in 2010.

Clapper forged close ties with Obama, whom he often briefed personally. He could be brutally frank; he had no qualms about bringing the president bad news. When the time came to make policy recommendations, Clapper would stick to intelligence and remain silent. Obama staffers would sometimes wonder if he was secretly a Republican.

The worst day of Clapper's career came on March 12, 2013, when he was called to testify before an open hearing of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Ron Wyden, the senior senator from Oregon, asked Clapper whether the NSA collects "any type of data at all on millions, or hundreds of millions, of Americans."

"No sir," said Clapper.

"It does not?" asked Wyden. He looked surprised.

"Not wittingly," said Clapper. The corners of his mouth bent down into his Grumpy Cat face. "There are cases where they could inadvertently, perhaps, collect, but not wittingly."

Wyden believed, and still believes, that Clapper was being intentionally deceptive. Clapper told me that he made a mistake and misunderstood the question. Wyden holds

a grudge to this day. "There's no other way to describe this than he lied to Congress. He lied to the American people," Wyden told me. "And that, in my judgment, is unacceptable."

"When I die, the first line of my obituary is how I lied to Senator Wyden," Clapper said in his basement. "I didn't lie. I made a big mistake. If I could answer the question differently, I would say, 'Senator Wyden, if we had such a program, we couldn't talk about it in this setting.'"

That June, Edward Snowden's disclosures showed that the NSA had indeed collected metadata for hundreds of billions of U.S. phone calls. There were petitions for Clapper to resign or face charges for perjury. Clapper took it hard. He would talk about quitting, and his staff would talk him out of it.

Snowden's disclosures inflamed public distrust of the intelligence community. Clapper now attributes much of the blowback to "the shock, the cartooning" of the NSA's mission. Over the next few years, he took some baby steps toward transparency. He started a blog where he posted a limited number of internal NSA documents and filings from the secret FISA court. But the gap between what the intelligence community was authorized to say and what the public was willing to believe remained vast. In 2014, this looked like a civics problem. The Russians would soon expose it as a critical vulnerability. Instead of hacking American missile systems or shutting down the power grid, they would ratchet open the widening breach between the government and the governed.

IN 1983, WHEN THE SOVIET UNION shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007, killing all 269 people on board, Clapper helped put together a detailed presentation for the Air Force that quickly made its way to the White House. Within a week, President Reagan had declassified portions of intercepted communications between Soviet pilots and ground command, an attempt to prove that they had deliberately downed the plane. (Despite Reagan's belief that the killing of civilians was intentional and "monstrous," it turned out that Soviet command believed the plane was military.) He even played audio from those intercepts in a televised speech to the country. "That was made public," Clapper said, "just to illustrate the typical duplicity of the Soviets. Which hasn't changed a bit."

Russian interference in the last election will likely be remembered not as an intelligence failure so much as a communications failure. Obama could have followed Reagan's example and declassified pieces of raw intelligence to make it clear what the Russians had done. He could have offered evidence of Putin's direct involvement. He chose not to.

► THE WORST MOVES OF 2017

Comey Gets Canned

But was firing him the worst mistake in "modern political history," as Bannon said? We checked with a real historian.



A big mistake was escalating the Vietnam War in 1965. [Firing Comey] was a big mistake. It led to Mueller's appointment. But it might cost Trump nothing in the end. Look, he's had a lot of mistakes. Some would say Bannon himself was a mistake." —Julian Zelizer, professor of history at Princeton

Instead, in October 2016, Clapper and Jeh Johnson, the secretary of Homeland Security, released a toothless 395-word statement, attributing the hacking of Democratic Party e-mails to “Russia’s senior-most officials.” The conclusion was “confident” and “based on the scope and sensitivity of these efforts,” but in keeping with the government’s tight-fisted control over its sources and methods, the public was essentially expected to swallow these findings without any proof. In January, the intelligence community issued a longer, more formal report. It, too, was written as though the American public would have no problem taking its conclusions on faith.

By this June, the picture of what Obama knew before the election had changed. According to reporting by *The Washington Post*, the intelligence community had “sourcing deep inside the Russian government,” tying the hack of the Democratic National Committee to Russia. And that source had, according to the *Post*, “captured Putin’s specific instructions” to defeat Clinton and elect Trump.

I asked Clapper why the White House didn’t let people know about the strength of the Russia intelligence before they cast their votes. He gave me a stoic look, as though he were giving blood.

“I can’t go into that,” he said.

Perhaps people who were skeptical about Russian meddling would have been convinced if those in the White House shared more of what they knew, I said.

“People are skeptical because you wouldn’t expose accesses—sensitive accesses and sources we had, which, you know, you’ve invested literally billions of dollars to obtain. We’re not going to give that away.” His voice was rising. “So I’m sorry that we couldn’t *lay out* all this convincing supporting evidence and then, of course, compromise it all.” He rapped his knuckles against the table. “What is the alternative? Is the alternative not to say anything?”

What Clapper did not mention is that such decisions happen further up the chain of command. Obama could have punched back before the election with economic sanctions, just as he did after Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014. Later, he could have appointed a bipartisan commission, as was done after 9/11, to investigate what had happened. John Kerry, Obama’s secretary of state, reportedly pushed for both measures, but neither was adopted.

“We did the best we could,” Clapper went on. “I think there are some in this country



Under Obama, Clapper seemed so apolitical to White House staffers that they sometimes wondered if he was secretly a Republican.

that, even if we had laid out all the information, they would say we’d fabricated it. We did the responsible thing. If you got a better idea, tell me.”

Clapper’s anger showed the scars that the Snowden leaks have left on the intelligence community’s psyche. He seemed perfectly aware that the pre-election warning lacked persuasive power. The evidence was there—it had been culled and marshaled and cross-referenced into the classified version of the January report—but he was helpless to deploy it.

SUSAN AND JAMES CLAPPER both come from Army families, and both their fathers eventually worked for the NSA. When James was an undergraduate at the University of Maryland, his mother set him up with Susan, who was still in high school. “I finally called her up to get my mother to stop pestering me,” he says. All four parents are now buried in Section 64 of Arlington National Cemetery.

On a cool day in September, James Clapper agreed to let me come along with him to see their graves. I picked him up at home; he was standing ready outside his garage in a polo shirt, cargo pants, Sperry Top-Siders, and sunglasses. In the car ride over, Google Maps fed him directions through a Bluetooth app connected to one of his hearing aids.

We found Section 64 and parked the car under a tree on Patton Drive. Clapper walked out on the long grass, taking care to walk between the rows. “I don’t come

out here as often as I should,” he said. He found Susan’s parents, then his own.

“Here we go,” he said. “Right here. So, this is my dad.” He gave a quick synopsis of the two officers’ careers. “This is a special place,” he said, looking out over the horizon, still wearing his sunglasses and sniffing a couple of times. On the other side of the hill was the officers’ club at Fort Myer. The former director of the NSA gave a talk there a few months back, I recalled. Having been asked why Trump appointed so many generals, the director replied, in essence, that they were the only qualified people Trump hadn’t succeeded in alienating.

“He does have, for some reason, a fascination with generals,” Clapper said. “Which is kind of ironic, since he spent Vietnam getting deferments. That was my war, Vietnam.”

I thought of the epithet that some veterans have hurled online at Trump, his family, and his inner circle—“Never served!” “This veteran says sit down and shut the fuck up, you know-nothing, never-served piece of shit,” the daughter of Ryan Zinke, Trump’s secretary of the interior, said on Instagram after Trump’s proposal to ban transgender soldiers.

But on that afternoon at Arlington, Clapper left it there. He showed none of the anger toward Trump he had flashed days before, in his basement. “Nobody wants a president to be successful more than I do,” Clapper said then. “It’s not about *him* or any other president. It’s just for the country. If a supporter could explain to me: What attributes or characteristics of the president can I admire? What are they? Can you think of any? Is it his honesty? His ethics? Is it his leadership? His grasp of foreign affairs? His understanding of the government? *What?* Tell me what it is that I should admire.”

There was no answer to be found at Arlington. Trump had come here before his inaugural, and again, on Memorial Day, to sun himself in the aura of the hallowed dead. Their families, he said, were “special, special people.” After his speech, Trump proceeded to Section 60, where he laid flowers on a grave belonging to the son of John Kelly, his chief of staff.

“Maybe I’m out of it,” Clapper had said. “A lot of people in this country think he’s great. I’d like him to be, you know?”

I believed him.

MATTATHIAS SCHWARTZ is a writer who lives in Washington, D.C. This is his first article for GQ.



Patriots

The King

EDDIE GUY



► Unbowed, unbent, and unbroken:
from left, Corker, Schneiderman,
Warner, Maddow, Mueller, Kimmel,
Pelosi, Schumer, Flake, and Harris.

Winter isn't coming. Winter, friends, is here. But while Donald Trump spent his year on the throne laying waste to our faith in democracy, the time for some reckoning is nigh. Lucky for America, the saviors of the republic are on the march. Meet the 24 brave souls with the best shot at taking down Trump in 2018

slayers!

AND JUSTICE HE SHALL PURSUE

The Oathkeeper
ROBERT MUELLER III



WHY 2018 IS THE YEAR OF BOBBY THREE STICKS & HIS ASSOCIATES

† We know you know Bob Mueller. He's a household name, incanted daily: *Please-Bobby-c'mon-Bobby-fix-it-Bobby*. But it's his band of highly specialized underlings you're less familiar with. For his investigation into the Trump-Russia saga, the ex-F.B.I. chief has personally drafted a group of experts with some *very specific* talents—talents that just might give us a sense of where this thing is headed in 2018. The dream team includes these heavy hitters.—BEN SCHRECKINGER



MICHAEL DREEBEN

Expert in tricky constitutional and criminal law. Has argued more than 100 cases before the Supreme Court.



ELIZABETH PRELOGAR

Clerked on the Supreme Court; fluent in Russian; competed as Miss Idaho in 2005 Miss America pageant.



KYLE FRENEY

Money-laundering specialist; moved to seize profits of the film *Wolf of Wall Street*, financed, in part, by a scheme hatched in Malaysia.



ANDREW WEISSMANN

A financial-fraud rock star (busted Enron) and an expert in flipping co-conspirators into cooperating witnesses.



ANDREW GOLDSTEIN

Corruption savant; adept at tracing money and tracking the kind of digital currencies hackers are often paid in.



BRANDON VAN GRACK

National-security heavyweight; prosecuted a would-be Chinese spy and a pro-ISIS hacker.

PROTECTOR OF THE AIRWAVES

The Foxhunter
RACHEL MADDOW

HOW SHE TURNS ONE MONOLOGUE INTO A LETHAL DRAGONGLASS SPEAR

† Look, Rachel Maddow couldn't have been happy about how Election Day shook out. Then again, her response to our nihilistic times has been to make her now number one cable news show the program of choice for politicos searching for substance—in an era largely bereft of it. In particular, Maddow's lengthy,

intricate opening monologues read more like term papers than talking points. While other Trump-era hosts have peppered guests with ranting one-liners in the hopes of going viral, she gleefully embarks on half-hour interviews and digs into policy minutiae. If you join one of her segments already in progress, you might have trouble following it.

She's still Rachel Maddow, so there's a dose of snark to go around. But in an increasing rarity, it is not despairing or hysterical—and has pushed MSNBC to a network high. You can disagree with her conclusions. But how she gets there is pretty airtight.—JAY WILLIS

“

She enters 2018 as cable news's number one in both ratings and substance—in an era largely bereft of it.

THE DAD VOTE

The Bringer of Common Sense

JIMMY KIMMEL

LAST YEAR, HE WAS THE JOKER. THIS YEAR, HE'S THE KING OF HEARTS

† It was his son's heart that occasioned Jimmy Kimmel's first-ever political monologue in his 15 years on late-night TV. Ten-day-old Billy would have died of a heart disease, the ABC host choked out through tears, had he been on Trumpcare. But it's Jimmy's own heart that has made him an unlikely—maybe the unlikeliest?—player in must-watch #Resistance TV. Six months in, he's still speaking from his own—and appealing to yours, whether it's red, blue, or purple. It sounds like this: "If your baby is going to die, and it doesn't have to, it shouldn't matter how much money you make. Whether you're

a Republican or a Democrat or something else, we all agree on that."

We did all agree on that back in May. And we still all agree on Kimmel in 2018—somehow the only guy who's been able to frame national debates around health care and post-Vegas gun control in human, not partisan, terms. He's also walloping Trump where it counts: as a \$15-million-a-year celebrity checking his own privilege—a network star genuinely felt as one of us. So this year, Jimmy, if you've got the cash, we'll leave you with one thought: Isn't fellow Nevadan Dean Heller's seat up for grabs?—SARAH BALL



THE 2018 BREAKERS OF CHAINS

MAYBE YOU KNOW 'EM, MAYBE YOU DON'T—BUT THEY'RE THE ONES WORKING EVERY ANGLE TO SAVE US

NEAL KATYAL

Who? The travel-ban slayer! Lawyer leading Hawaii's fight against Trump's decree.
Folksy trivia: Has argued as many Supreme Court cases as Thurgood Marshall.

LEAH GREENBERG & EZRA LEVIN

Who? The founders of Indivisible; wrote the Resistance Bible: a Google Doc guide to organizing.
Folksy trivia: The married couple met not via activism but...at a 2008 party.

FAIZ SHAKIR

Who? Spars for the Constitution as the ACLU's national political director.
Folksy trivia: Nimble of mind and body! Led Harvard's baseball team in stolen bases in 2001.

MAGGIE HABERMAN & GLENN THRUSH

Who? Tabloid vets turned killer *New York Times* White House correspondents.
Folksy trivia: Thrush moonlights as a guitar journo. Pen name? Glenn Thrash.

JASON KANDER

Who? Has turned defeat in Missouri into PAC fuel for nationwide anti-Trump races.
Folksy trivia: Partially supported by *Cabaret* royalties. Thanks, Uncle.

HEATHER McGHEE

Who? Czar of the think-tank Demos; sharp voice in favor of equal rights.
Folksy trivia: Compassionately fielded a C-SPAN caller who wanted to know "how not to be prejudiced."—B.S.



THE OPPORTUNISM OPTION

1 Dragon, 2 Heads

CHUCK-N-NANCY™

A (NEW) FIELD GUIDE TO (YE OLDE) REALPOLITIK



Trump styles them as one—good ol' Chuck-n-Nance, just two lovable, liberal coastal elites the president respects more than, say, anyone in his own party. And seriously—who could be living in more of a George R.R. Martin-ized Risk game than these two? First came the

debt-ceiling compromise, when Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi stepped up to the negotiating table with little leverage—and somehow left with exactly what they asked for. The price tag? A bunch of close-talking and intimate shoulder-petting from POTUS, who was later in

thrall to his good media marks over the deal. C-SPAN caught Schumer bragging "He likes us!" into a hot mic, and frankly, it's impossible to disagree. Their high status may not last—but for a pair who've been on the Hill since the '80s, they move pretty quick.—J.W.

Patriots

THE ART OF THE DISS

Kings of Traitors

BOB CORKER & JEFF FLAKE

TURNOATS: NEVER NOT QUOTABLE! A ZINGER-OFF

† Conscientious Republicans?

Finally, we've got some! While most Republicans are keeping their heads down, Senators Bob Corker and Jeff Flake have decided they don't care. Both have opted not to run for re-election, freeing them up to be full-time pains in Trump's ass for the entirety of 2018. Already, they're providing a sterling example for how to talk (effective!) shit to Trump. You should do things like...

Remind People He's Dumb

FLAKE: "We pretended that the emperor wasn't naked. Even worse: We checked our critical faculties at the door and pretended that the emperor was making sense."

Like, Dangerously Dumb

CORKER: "Sometimes I feel like he's on a reality show

of some kind, you know? When he's talking about these big foreign-policy issues. He doesn't realize that we could be heading towards World War III."

And Basically a Despot

FLAKE: "Volatile unpredictability is not a virtue. We have quite enough volatile actors to deal with internationally as it is without becoming one of them."

Or at Least a Giant Man-Baby

CORKER: "It's a shame the White House has become an adult day-care center. Someone obviously missed their shift this morning."

He doesn't realize that we could be heading towards World War III.



THE ART OF THE DISS

HERE'S HOPING

The Once and Future Queen

KAMALA HARRIS

IS IT 2020 YET?

† Call it Obama-stalgia, but not since Barack's early days have there been so many urgent whispers about the extent of someone's political future—before the ink on their current business cards is even dry. For California senator Kamala Harris, the comparisons to 44 may have been inevitable, but she's been too busy to pay them much heed. Her maiden Senate-floor speech excoriated Trump's anti-immigration agenda, and she was

among the first legislators to call the Muslim ban... well, a Muslim ban. She teamed with Rand Paul, of all people, to author a bipartisan bail-reform bill. And, famously, Harris questioned decaying Confederate statue Jeff Sessions so doggedly during a Senate intelligence hearing that the wide-eyed A.G. begged for the cross-examination to stop, saying she was making him "nervous." Good. Because hers is a party still battling

its Hillary-vs.- Bernie ghosts of election losses past, the excitement around Harris has also sparked a not-so-fast-there backlash. But much of that criticism appears aimed more at the *idea* of her ascending prematurely than at the things she's actually done in office. The freshman senator's platform is still, excitingly, in development. Just in case anyone in swing states might be interested anytime soon.—J.W.



A LITTLE BURR-D TOLD HIM

Master of Spies

MARK WARNER

WE ASKED WHAT IT'S LIKE TO INVESTIGATE DJT. HIS LE CARRÉ-ISH REPLY.

† Sure, Donald Trump blasts Congress all the time for not getting things done. But he's actually eager to see some inaction and infighting...within the committees investigating him. So far, he's not getting it from the Senate Intelligence

Committee, which probably stands the best chance of nailing him. That's because the guys captaining it—Senators Richard Burr (R-N.C.) and Mark Warner (D-Va.)—are conducting a master class in cooperation. Their approach is

no-drama. The work is, uh, not. Warner admits he feels like he's living in a spy novel. "Yeah, there have been moments where it's a little surreal," he told *GQ*. "Somebody drops off a packet of information, or somebody gets you at a cocktail

party and draws you aside and has some wild rumor. I actually probably don't hear as many of them as some of the folks in my press shop, who I think get bombarded on a weekly basis by somebody who believes they got the goods."—B.S.



BEGGING YOUR NON-PARDON

The City Sentinel

ERIC SCHNEIDERMAN

OR: TRUMP'S HOMETOWN NEMESIS

† For Trump, the attorney general of New York is a special kind of headache-maker—a guy with the ability to poke his nose into all kinds of Trump deals cooked up back home. When they tangled last, over Trump U., Trump paid out \$25 million. "There is a volcano of bad ideas coming out of Washington these days," Schneiderman told *GQ*. "And we won't back down." That means prying into things the feds aren't: the Donald J. Trump Foundation, the Eric Trump Foundation, and one of Trump's lawyers, Jay Sekulow.—B.S.





► For the
Night King is
dark and
full of errors.

P 1 1 4
G Q 6 0
MOTY

Men of the Year

TRUMP'S election upended every American institution—including late-night comedy, where wacky just no longer cuts it. **STEPHEN COLBERT** is proving that a late-night host's new responsibility is to do what a president used to do: steady a reeling nation. (And *then* do the wacky)

Stephen Colbert *Makes* *America* *Great*

Bad
Hombre

ANNA PEELE

MARK SELIGER





tuxedo \$2,995
shirt \$425
(throughout
first three photos)

Ralph Lauren

glasses
Barton Perreira

watch
Cartier

BEFORE HE STARTED beating Fallon in the ratings and replaced Jon Stewart as the ombudsman of late night, Stephen Colbert spent a decade playing the very white, very American “Stephen Colbert”: the kind of man you might now see defending Donald Trump on Fox News...or defending Donald Trump during White House press briefings...or defending Donald Trump during an interrogation by Robert Mueller. But like Superman jumping into a phone booth and removing his navy suit to reveal—huh!—another navy suit, Colbert stepped up to save us. Not by parodying far-right hypocrisy—by confronting it. *GQ* talked to the Man of the Year about pretending to be the person you really are, why Trump is a bad talk-show guest, and if this too shall pass.

GQ: It felt like this year was terrible for everyone. But in the context of world history, how bad is it, really?

STEPHEN COLBERT: America has made mistakes before this—I would say the Dred Scott decision’s still worse than what we’re going on right now.

So, Trump: better than Dred Scott.

That’s a low bar to shuffle over. But yes, Trump is better than the Dred Scott decision. Trump’s election is a stone thrown into the pond that just will never stop rippling. I think it’s going to be generations before we recover from whatever it is he’s doing.

But you think we will recover?

I hope that we will. I don’t know how. I don’t know how we recover from choosing that man to be the leader of this country. I don’t know how we recover our ethical or moral standing in the world, because this is an abdication of an American moral philosophy. We’ve completely abandoned it.

Watching Obama be so gracious and Trump be so disgusting on Inauguration Day was just like, “How did we go from *that* to *this*?”
Seeing Donald Trump represent the United States is like hearing little children say filthy words. It shocks you and makes you wonder how this came about.

It feels like you’re here at exactly the right time. Not that Trump was destined to be president and you were destined to take him on or something, but does it feel like you’re in the position you’re in for a reason?

I don’t have any such grand picture of myself. But I’m grateful to have a purpose now. To know what I want to do every day, which is to keep my eye on what’s happened for the last 24 hours and talk about it. The night Trump was elected, that live show was the hardest show I ever did. Just the reality of what we were experiencing in real time with the audience, and sharing with them...that was the hardest thing I ever did. But afterward I had my senior editorial staff come down, and I said, “Well, if you were wondering why you have this job, now you know.”

How has Trump’s election changed your relationship with the audience?

Perhaps they sense how grateful I am to be onstage with them. I need this job. I get the same sort of release that I think the audience is looking for.

How do you keep perspective when you have to deal with things in those 24-hour chunks?

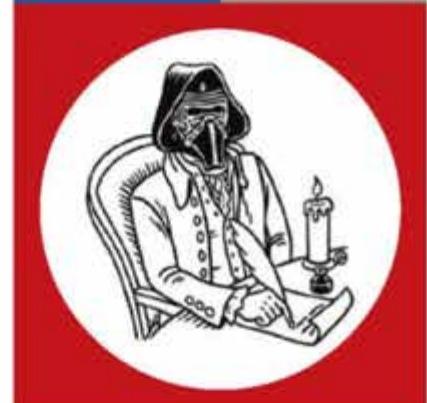
The “How Do We Solve a Problem Like America?” Survey

Our institutions have served us well since the country was founded more than 240 years ago, but America needs an update. We’re asking normal citizens to proudly stand up...and then go look for a pen, because it’s survey time! First up: totally normal citizen STEPHEN COLBERT.

Section

1

A
GQ
SURVEY
2017



How can we make the Bill of Rights even Righter?

AMENDMENT II

Same wording, but the phrase “well regulated” is in all caps and glitter.

AMENDMENT IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, unless you’re sitting on a copy of the Pee-Pee Tape, in which case, we’re comin’ in!

AMENDMENT VIII: ‘THE LAST JEDI’

A lot of fans are speculating that Rey gets tempted over to the dark side in this amendment.

AMENDMENT LII

Let’s just admit there are too many podcasts.

Oh, my wife and kids. I'm old for somebody who does one of these jobs—I got this gig at 51, and I did my other show at 41. Guys like Conan got it when they were 30 or something. But I already was married, with kids, and had a value system that was really centered around the love of your daily life. That's what calms me down. Like the moon this morning—the beautiful half-moon above the trees on a crisp morning, and above all of the clouds the stars forever shine. It gives you a sense that you're just one small thing. You're not changing anything; you're reacting to it. You might be changing people's days, but it also helps to keep you from taking yourself too seriously.

Despite being...you, you've stayed in suburban New Jersey. Did you ever consider moving?

I love it out in the suburbs. I like driving my Volvo to the dry cleaners to decide which of my khaki pants to pick out. I also like getting away from this world. Like, none of my friends out there are show-business people. My best friends out there are all Wall Street guys. They're all Republicans.

Do they like the show?

They come to the show. Their kids come to the show. It doesn't matter.



We need some new subcommittees to allow Congress to fulfill its true potential as the world's finest deliberative body. Would you please suggest a few?

Senate Subcommittee on Whether Ashley Is Too Hot To Be Dating Jeff (She Is)

Senate Subcommittee on That Thing Where You Suddenly Think

of a Witty Remark You Could Have Made at a Party. We must research this scourge and find a cure.

Senate Subcommittee on New Sounds That Mean "Yummy"

Joint Subcommittee on Encouraging Senator Bernie Sanders to Eat His Egg-Salad Sandwiches in the Privacy of His Home



You don't have the burden of trying to be cool.

Oh, sure. I'm a white, straight, Christian—add to that Catholic, the Microsoft of Christianity—American male. In a way that makes no sense at all, that's kind of like "American neutral." And up until now my whole career has been kind of questioning, "Why is that American neutral? Why is that a hegemonic position?" So by embracing it very strongly, what I have been doing my whole career is questioning my identity by playing it—by performing my identity.

It's white-guy drag.

I'm a white guy in white-guy drag. That's certainly what the "Stephen Colbert" character was—a heightened white guy

really embracing the white-guyness. But it was not just an act; it was also a confession, which is "This is really what I am," and then questioning, "What does that mean?" Now I don't feel like I have to be something else—I can just be that. And if it's uncool, it's uncool. But I know I don't have another gear.

So you're not questioning it anymore?

Oh, no, I do. I just don't do it subversively. I do it... "obversively"? It was subversive. Now it's overt.

What is your role as an interviewer?

It's no secret that some people have a story to tell, so then my job is to get out of their way and be a surrogate of the audience's enjoyment of the story. But

Section**3**

Other countries have overhauled their currency, but ours has pretty much stayed the same. How about a money makeover?

Abolish money in favor of the barter system. I should be able to pay for

my dry cleaning with a jug of sorghum.

I think the problem with paper currency is that there aren't enough increments. When I'm buying something that costs \$17, I should be able to fish out a \$17 bill, or at the very least

a \$9 and an \$8. And they should ALL have Harriet Tubman on them—she's earned it! Different poses: stoic Harriet Tubman, a silly one, Harriet Tubman Jet Skiing...

The original cast of Mount Rushmore

was great, but how about some new faces?

Good-Girl Miley, Bad-Girl Miley, John F. Kennedy, and Miley when she just don't GAF.

Presidents always end their speeches with "May God bless

the United States of America." Let's improve it!

"I'll see you in hell!"

"Zip-zam-zoom! Presiden-toodle-oo!"

"Now, if you want me to bomb someplace, just shout it out. Ten seconds. Go."

with other people, my job is to make them feel at ease when they get out there and then to be publicly curious about them. People come with their own agendas. It's not my job to change their agendas.

And yet one of the best parts of your show is when the public curiosity becomes debate—you seem to really delight in someone who can knock you off balance. Letterman was the same way.

I love it. That's why I love having Bill Maher. People say, "Do you really like having him on?" because we've been contentious with each other. God, it's a joy! The more resistance the better.

Maher will engage with you even if you're like, "Why would you do that?" But even if you're honestly asking, Donald Trump feels like you're criticizing him and shuts down. Trump is actually kind of a boring guest.
My brother Ed was in the audience the night that Trump was on, in 2015. And after the show, he goes, "Okay, so he's not a dummy." Because Trump wouldn't even look me in the eye, really. He put his hands in his lap like a little boy, and he was very, very safe. Obviously, there's an element of fear of making a mistake—what's he going to get out of the interview if he's too entertaining? I had the same experience when I interviewed Bill O'Reilly back in the day. It was like, "Wow, that was really boring"—Bill O'Reilly wouldn't be Bill O'Reilly on my show. That was the red meat he threw for his own fans.

O'Reilly and Trump are people who do a character that is as much a part of who they are publicly as *The Colbert Report* Colbert was.

One of the things that we learned at the old show is that somebody's gotta play straight—it was hard for me to do my character and to have somebody else doing character, because it was too slippery; there was no place to stand.

And so one of the things I've had to learn on this show is I've got to be myself. I've gotta play straight to the guest's character to a large degree. Changing my interview style was a challenge for me.

It's interesting that you called yourself a questioner, because late-night television is a place where you can see exactly what drives people creatively. Like, Jimmy Fallon wants everyone to be comfortable and to have fun. And Jimmy Kimmel has a need to personalize, and Seth Meyers has to point out logical fallacies, and Sam Bee expresses righteous indignation, and John Oliver exposes. And I feel like you're a questioner. You're engaging with other people to try to find common ground.
That would be a good goal. And if that's what you perceive, I'm glad of that. Because yeah, I'm looking for community.

How so?

There's an aspect of wanting to love other people, you know? Years ago I was first talking about this with Spike Jonze, actually. He came up and we split a chocolate bar and he interviewed me about what I wanted *The Late Show* to be. And then he wrote it up and sent it back to me right after the show started: "Here's a reminder of what you were thinking six months ago about what you wanted the show to be." One of the things I said to him was "How do you do a comedy show that includes love on any level?" Nobody wants to hear the word "love." That's a four-letter word. That's a comedy-killer. Because while it's a happy idea, love is very serious. It's not the sort of thing you should say out loud. I'm even hesitant to say it out loud in this interview. I want to give people the benefit of the doubt. Even the president! When he started, I said, "Give him a chance but not an inch."

ANNA PEELE is GQ's culture editor.

COLBERT SURVEY**Section****4**

The financial-disclosure form is very complicated. Can you simplify it?

Did you meet with any Russians?

YES NO

For real, though, did you?

YES NO

List any and all foreign real estate hol—
DID YOU MEET WITH RUSSIANS?

The National Mall has plenty of space. What could we add?

The Museum of Acceptable Protest, so we have a reference for which forms of standing/sitting/kneeling/marching/boycotting do or do not disrespect

our flag/troops/country/heritage/stadium pretzel bites.

Isn't it time we finally honored those who battled in our nation's Cupcake Wars?

Please update the oath of office.

"Yup to all the Bible stuff, amen."

"In God we trust"? Who are we fooling?! Any other suggestions?

"In God we trust, until the nukes start flyin'—then all deities are on the table"

"Use promo code GODTRUST for free popcorn shrimp at participating Buffalo Wild Wings"

"We trusted you, God"





tuxedo \$3,600
shirt \$490

Dior Homme

shoes \$675
Burberry

socks

Gold Toe

glasses

Barton Perreira

where to buy it?
go to the fashion
directories on gq.com

The Golden Age of Kevin Durant

NATHANIEL
GOLDBERG

AFTER his painful exodus from OKC, KEVIN DURANT reached the mountaintop this June: NBA champion, finals MVP, game-winning shotmaker. GQ's *Zach Baron* spent days with KD during summer vacation—from hotel rooftops in India to the pit of self-inflicted Twitter hell—and watched Golden State's ultimate Warrior recharge himself to chase ring number two

P 122
G 60
MOTY

► Champion



► pants \$995

Fear of God

+

coat \$2,995

Burberry

tank top \$35

Nike

sneakers \$160

Jordan Brand

bracelet

Renvi

watch

Cartier



FIRST THE WAITERS in Delhi brought Kevin Durant a plate of butter chicken, and then what looked like...a pizza? Then some rice, and a glass

of tequila, and then a plate of samosas. "I'm sorry," Durant said to the waiter bending low over his shoulder. "What is this?" He was wearing a Morrissey "Boxers" tour T-shirt and black jeans and attempting to pretend that he couldn't see the long line of people trying to see him. He'd landed on a private jet a few hours ago: the first real NBA star in anyone's memory to come all this way, to India, where basketball is still a novelty. This dinner, out on the roof deck of a hotel in the city's diplomatic enclave and nominally hosted by the NBA, was in his honor. Well-intentioned waiters kept trying to bring him things. Scotch. An apron, for some reason. Naan. They brought out the biggest piece of naan bread you've ever seen. After some conversation, Durant was persuaded to hoist the bread in the air to the upper edge of his seven-foot wingspan, like a man offering a sacrifice to God, so that his YouTube guy could film this moment of cultural exchange for his YouTube channel.

Just six weeks earlier, Durant's team, the Golden State Warriors, won the NBA Finals in five games. Durant was the finals MVP. In Game 3, with his team trailing the Cleveland Cavaliers with under a minute to go, he hit the shot of his life—a three-pointer, tossed up as casually and optimistically as a wave

hello, over LeBron James, his role model and rival. "That was the best moment I ever had," Durant told me. "I made the game-winning shot in the finals against my fucking idol. Somebody that I really, really, really followed since I was a ninth-grade high schooler. I felt like he was passing the torch to me."

Even before his Game 3 shot fell, it felt inevitable that the Warriors would win. They'd arrived in the finals without having lost a single playoff game. And Durant, who'd spent the season being cast as a villain for leaving the Oklahoma City Thunder—or at least a man more interested in winning a championship than remaining, for sentimental reasons, on the team that first drafted him—was playing to the full, lethal level of his abilities. It was merciless: 38 points in the first game of the finals, 33 in the second, 31 and 35 in Games 3 and 4, and 39 in the close-out game against a Cleveland team that likely went home seeing Durant's silky, improbably elegant jump shot in their dreams.

The night the Warriors won the title, Durant walked out of the arena tipsy from the beer he'd had in the locker room, waded through a crowd of fans, got in his Tesla, and was driven home, to celebrate more. After nine often frustrating years in the league, he was a champion, the consensus best

player on the best team, and now, in the months that followed, he was enthusiastically exploring what that meant. He went to Vegas to celebrate, and to Hawaii to paddleboard, and to Sicily, where he attended Google Camp with Prince Harry and David Geffen. "I got to meet people I never thought I'd meet," he told me. "I lived in L.A. all summer. I hung out at Nobu Malibu for July Fourth." About a year ago, the NBA asked him if perhaps he'd come be a basketball ambassador for them for a few days in India, and he'd agreed—his charitable foundation could use the occasion to build a couple of courts there. He felt like, why not? How hard could it be, to be an ambassador?

Now he was finding out how hard it could be. He stood and greeted the television host Rannvijay Singh, then sat, and then stood up again to take a photo with Satnam Singh Bhamara, a G Leaguer for the Dallas Mavericks, who was also in town. Then he sat back down, only to have a functionary come over and ask if he could meet some "pretty big business owners" here in the Delhi community. For the eighth or seventeenth time this evening, Durant rose to shake some stranger's hand. "This is bullshit," he whispered to his agent, Rich Kleiman, but still stood, smiling, gracefully concealing his fatigue. This new stranger was former tennis pro and world No. 16 Vijay Amritraj. Amritraj was impeccably groomed and professionally smiling—gold buttons on his jacket, gold rings on his hand, gold watch on his wrist. He and Kleiman mimed tennis serves at each other. Next up was a kid in a Jordan Brand shirt. "Every morning I watch you," the kid said. "Appreciate that," Durant said. Some guy in an iridescent vest emerged with a baseball: "Would you mind signing this?"

The evening humidity of India in July bore down. In the background, just out of sight, a pair of DJs played nationless house music. "That's it," Durant said, beseeching Kleiman, as more people milled around in the middle distance. He crouched behind the giant naan that was still in front of him, hiding.

Finally the trickle of dignitaries dried up, and Durant ordered a glass of Pinot Noir, "biggest glass you have," which turned out to be a wineglass the size of my forearm. We all got one. Durant visibly relaxed. He offered up his glass for a toast and then took a photo of all the glasses clinking, the cool red wine sloshing around. "I kind of like the vibe here," he said, exhaling. It was late, and though there was half-hearted talk about going to a second location, we wound up instead ordering more wine to Durant's suite. Someone found a portable speaker. Durant lay flat on a daybed, his legs as long as a compact car. Then Jay-Z's "Lucifer" came on, and Durant sat up to rap, word for word, the second verse, about triumph and its cost:

(text continued on page 128)

P 128
G O 60
M O T Y



jacket \$1,695
Valentino

+
t-shirt \$585

The Elder
Statesman

pants \$750

Lanvin at
mrporter.com

ring

Tateossian

necklace

Giles & Brother



P 1 2 7
M 0 6 0
N O T Y

ABOUT
THESE
CLOTHES

Heading into 2018, can we all resolve to forget the modest "pop of color" (i.e., what those whimsical lime green socks are lending to your otherwise whimsy-less charcoal suit) and embrace brilliant color in all its glory? KD is already leading the way, fearlessly reaching for the brightest designer clothes he can get his hands (and legs and chest) on. When color looks this good, why stop at socks?

◀ raincoat \$3,695
Burberry

+
tank top \$35
Nike

necklace
Renvi

▶ coat \$8,450
Berluti

sweater \$1,195
The Elder Statesman

pants \$450
Heron Preston

+
t-shirt \$25
Nike

sneakers (Supreme x
Comme des Garçons)
Nike

socks
Gold Toe

necklace
Giles & Brother

watch
Rolex



*Yes, this is holy war
I wet y'all all with the holy water
Spray from the Heckler-Koch automatic
All the static, shall cease to exist
Like a sabbatical, I throw a couple at
you, take six!
Spread love, to all of my dead thugs
I pour out a little Louis, to a head above
Yessir, and when I perish, the meek shall
inherit the Earth*

In the calm of his hotel room, Durant told me that he related to Jay-Z. Not only the younger, defiant Jay-Z now on the speaker, but the present-day, 2017 Jay-Z, the guy who just made 4:44. The older, more vulnerable, confessional artist. "Just the honesty," Durant said. Durant has been signed to Jay's Roc Nation Sports for years and is friendly with Jay-Z. But there was something about listening to 4:44. "The openness," Durant said, putting his finger on it. "You could tell he had something he wanted to get off his chest. And it can be hard when you got so many people watching you. So I feel like you got to build up that courage to just say: 'Look, man, this is how I do things.'"

• • •

THE OFF-SEASON—even an off-season as full of opportunity and good feeling as this past one—has always been a complicated time for Durant. "In between, when I'm not playing, I'm just chilling, waiting for my next game," he told me. "When I'm in the summer, I'm waiting on my next game. These meetings and these corporate events I gotta go to, I'm waiting on the next game. I'm just like not even in the mind frame to think anything else is important. And that's a fault."

When I first met Durant, in 2015, he was 26 and trying to make up for lost time. His childhood had been a lonely one, and basketball—a socializing force for many of his peers—had isolated him further. Unlike LeBron James, who'd grown up in the spotlight and had years to get used to an unsettling level of fame and attention, or Steph Curry, who'd grown up wealthy, in a family that passed along a measure of security and knowledge about life off the court, Durant was learning as he went. "I wasn't no phenom growing up," he told me. "It was just my mom, my brother, my godfather, and my grandma. My games wasn't packed out in high school. I didn't even play at night. So this shit is all new. As it's happening, I'm experiencing it for the first time. I wasn't taught a certain way to be growing up. I got taught right from wrong, and how to be fair. Anything else, I had to figure out." At the time we spoke, he was playing out the penultimate year of his contract with Oklahoma City and full of a growing curiosity about the world: about food and wine, about travel,

about clothes, about all the things that everyone else around him already seemed to know. "What's the craziest place you've been where you had to taste, like, a piece of their culture?" he asked me then.

His decision to sign with the Golden State Warriors last summer was about basketball: He looked at the team, the coach, and the players, and wanted to join in what they had. But leaving Oklahoma City also felt, to Durant, like personal growth. "I chose to take control of my life, and I think that was a huge step for me personally, and I felt really proud," he told me.

The championship he won in his first season with the Warriors was confirmation that he'd made the right choice. But he also found, away from Oklahoma City, that his world kept getting bigger in ways he hadn't anticipated and didn't always know how to deal with. In Game 1 of the finals, he was at the free-throw line when he heard a woman heckling him, shouting "Brick!" as he released each shot. It was only when he looked over that he realized the woman was Rihanna. This was not the kind of thing that regularly happened in OKC. "Rihanna never came to my game before, unless we were in L.A. She didn't come to a home game of mine before. Jay-Z and all these people who come...that amount of attention for me is like, you ever seen *Hancock*? You remember when he had to walk into that event and all these cameras were flashing, and he just didn't know how to smile? That's me sometimes. I get a little overwhelmed at that shit. Because, man, I can remember me cooking up as a kid by myself. Now millions of people are watching me play? That's an adjustment, bro."

Durant was the number two draft pick in the 2007 NBA draft. He won Rookie of the Year. He's a four-time scoring champion and a former league MVP. He's won two Olympic gold medals. But for most of his career his time in the league was, relatively speaking, quiet. He played in Oklahoma City, in front of adoring but unglamorous crowds, and though he had an occasionally adversarial relationship with the local press there, not too many stories they wrote made it outside the city. But the past year and a half with Golden State had been a rude lesson in how many things the NBA, and the media ecosystem that has sprung up around it, required of him outside of and beyond basketball.

The next morning in Delhi, Durant woke up bleary-eyed and dressed for the day in long track pants and a red Nike basketball shirt. The plan was to go to the school where his foundation had built the new basketball courts and then to drive south, out of Delhi, to Noida, where the NBA had started a basketball academy. There, an NBA functionary explained, Durant would help the academy's students break the Guinness World Record

for "biggest basketball lesson," capped off by a VIP-only dinner at a resort nearby. The dinner, arranged by the music executive Steve Stoute, whom Durant and Kleiman have known for years, was to be hosted by two young Indian plutocrats—one an executive in a company specializing in construction and arms dealing, the other a concert promoter who'd just successfully pulled off Justin Bieber's first show in India. A day of being a professional basketball player, without an actual basketball game anywhere in sight.

The morning traffic in Delhi was dense with taxis, guys on bikes, rickshaws, everyone driving like running backs seeking contact. We stopped first at the Ramjas School, where Durant inaugurated the courts he'd built with an arcing shot from the top of the key, and was then swarmed by the little bodies of students. Then, as the humidity rose, we were back out into traffic, making our way through a slow drip of cement trucks and buses, southeast through the city, and then out of it into a cloudy green haze. After about an hour our caravan came to rest at the Jaypee Greens Integrated Sports Complex, in Greater Noida, where the NBA was holding its academy. For the next two hours, Durant was put to work in an increasingly surreal set of tasks. First he joined a clinic, downstairs on the basketball court, helping the NBA's coaches run their teenage students through drills. Then, upstairs, he gave a press conference. Finally Durant was led back downstairs, to break the Guinness World Record for...something. The explanations kept differing as to exactly what.

Carlos Barroca, the NBA's associate vice president for basketball operations in India, was onstage, in front of a gym full of children. Four large screens showed four other gyms in Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai, and Kolkata, also full of students. The lesson began. Barroca, in a polo shirt and Britney Spears headset, invited Durant to stand next to him. Then Barroca began chanting:

"One, two, three, *stance*."

All the kids in the gym crouched and extended their arms, raptor-like.

Barroca looked at Durant, and Durant looked back at him. Then, belatedly, Durant, too, got in his stance.

"One, two, three, *defense*."

The students slapped the floor, then spread their wingspans again, and Durant, reluctantly, did this too. Then Barroca asked the assembled children to run in place, and so Durant ran in place.

"I need to know how you become a champion," Barroca said to his assembled pupils. "Do you play like a sleeping cat?" he asked. "Or like a tiger?" He asked his pupils to roar and they roared. On one screen, kids were absentmindedly trotting around in Bangalore; on another, Chennai had temporarily cut out. *(continued on page 183)*

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turtleneck \$515

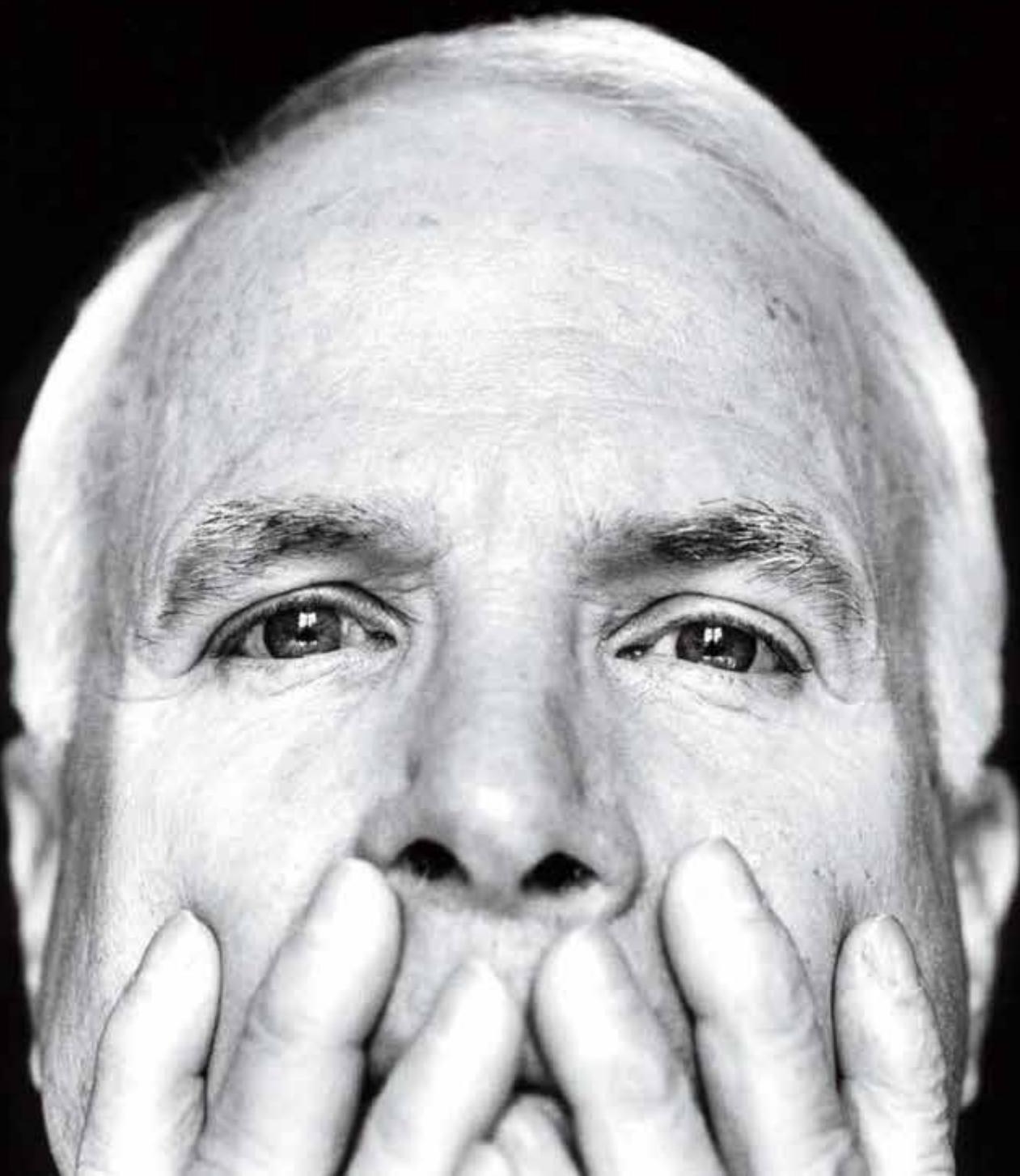
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where to
buy it? go to
the fashion
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Veteran

The Fighter



We thought we had JOHN McCAIN figured out. The cranky ex-maverick. The hard-righter who'd given us Sarah Palin. Then came Trump, the Russian collusion scandal, endless assaults on health care. And most challengingly, his own diagnosis with cancer. That's when McCain showed us who he'd always been

■ JASON ZENGERLE



HEN JOHN McCAIN revealed in July that he'd been diagnosed with glioblastoma—the same aggressive form of brain cancer that killed his friend Ted Kennedy—the news seemed of a piece with all of the other dismal political headlines of the year. But in the midst

of surgery and radiation and chemo, the Arizona senator has somehow emerged as perhaps the most consequential man in Washington, casting the deciding “no” vote on the Obamacare repeal; urging his fellow senators, Republicans and Democrats alike, to do better; and serving as a constant thorn in the side of Donald Trump. All the while, the war-hero senator, now 81, has re-asserted himself as a living example of dignity and honor in the face of adversity—and provided a model of the type of courageous, experienced public servant we need to fix our broken politics. We recently spoke to McCain about the tumultuous year in politics, his health, and about what he’s still eager to achieve.

GQ: How has Washington, D.C., changed since you arrived 30 or so years ago?

JOHN McCAIN: You know, as we grow older, we forget the rough spots and we only remember the good times. That's just human nature, as you know. But having said that, the Senate was a much more congenial place than it is today. That seems to be missing now. And there's clearly a polarization that's taking place that outside forces are effecting. For example, declaring a jihad against certain senators because they weren't in line with certain people's beliefs. In other words, disagreements, sometimes strong disagreements, but it's much more intense.

If you were to mentor someone new to politics, what would you tell them? What would you want them to know about Washington, about Congress, about public life?

I would talk to them about two things: Do the right thing. And second, develop relationships. You know, one of the great joys of my life was, after I was elected to the House, Mo Udall took me under his wing—liberal Democrat, but totally together on Arizona issues, he and I. He was one of the most entertaining, funny, but thoughtful people that I have ever known. He and Ted

Kennedy both told me the same thing: If a joke is funny, it's worth telling again and again and again. I loved Mo; he couldn't have been kinder to me.

So what would I say to a new member of Congress? I'd say, “Look at what Mo did.” He had an incredible impact, and he always had me join in. You know, he'd call me over and say, “Okay, here's what we're gonna do. What do you think?” I'd say, “I'm with you.” You're not going to get things accomplished purely on a party-line basis. We are seeing graphic examples of that now.

Your family has been in public service for a long time. Of course, many people think of our current political moment as very fraught, but how do you view it, in the scope of what your family has seen? You know, Henry Louis Gates does a television show where he traces people's ancestry, and they traced mine all the way back to Charlemagne. And my great-great-great-great-whatever-it-is was a colonel on General Washington's staff. My family has been involved in literally every conflict, every conflict, including my great-uncles in World War I; my grandfather in World War I and World War II; as you know, my dad's service; and my sons—both my sons have been in Iraq or Afghanistan. It's a long history, and I'm very proud of it, and it's obviously had an impact on me and my behavior.

Small item: When they found out I had this tumor, they said, “Well, you can't go back to work.” And I said I have to go back to work. There's kids that are doing a lot more dangerous things than me, and so that's why it was only a week and a half after a rather serious five-hour-and-forty-minute operation that I went back to the Senate. I had to. I had to.

Do you view yourself in some ways as serving as a check on President Trump and preventing damaging things from happening? Some people, like my dear friend Lindsey Graham and others, have established kind of a working relationship with the president, as you know. Unfortunately, that's not the case with me and him. I have to do what I think is right, and I'm doing what I think is right.

Is that part of your impetus for coming back so quickly after your surgery?

Absolutely. We're doing a defense bill, which, as you know, is vital. We have more young men and women being killed now in training and maintenance than are being killed in combat because of the cuts in defense spending. I knew I was taking a risk. But am I taking a risk compared with these kids that are fighting in Afghanistan right now and getting killed?

How do you want to be remembered when eventually you're done serving?

“He served his country.” Hopefully, they can add the word “honorably.”

I think people will be able to add that with no qualms.
“He was not voted Miss Congeniality.”

How is your health now? How are you feeling?
I'm really feeling good. Got a lot of energy.... If I could just add one thing....

Please.

That is, I have had the most fortunate life of anybody you will ever talk to, and I have nothing but gratitude, gratitude and joy, because I've had the most fortunate life that anybody has ever had. So I spend my time in gratitude and work as hard as I can to get done what I can get done while I can. See what I mean?

JASON ZENGERLE is GQ's political correspondent.

appear

style

TO CELEBRATE our favorite suits of the year—suits so well tailored they're practically architectural—we took ageless *Twin Peaks* hero KYLE MACLACHLAN on a tour of the new Manhattan masterpiece by the late Zaha Hadid

■ CHRIS HEATH

■ PAOLA KUDACKI





◀◀ OPENING PAGES

suit \$1,795
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Emporio Armani

+

coat (in hand)
and boots
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building throughout
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► THIS PAGE

suit jacket \$1,800
pants \$990
boots \$1,195

Calvin Klein
205W39NYC

+

watch
Tudor

maquette, courtesy of
Related and Zaha
Hadid Architects



ON 'TWIN PEAKS: THE RETURN,' this summer's 18-part sequel to David Lynch's iconic early-'90s show, things happen in ways you never see on TV—even now, even in this era of "peak TV." It is paced like nothing else out there. It *sounds* like nothing else. It is odd in all kinds of delightful and unexpected ways, periodically startling, and even at its most abstruse and capricious, it somehow always pulls you along with it. But maybe more remarkable than how things do happen on *Twin Peaks* is how things *don't* happen.

One mesmerizing moment, from part seven: a scene at the Roadhouse, the local tavern, empty but for a man behind the bar and another man sweeping the floor. The shot is framed, wide and still, so that you can see them both. Eventually the man behind the bar will answer a phone call, and the story will advance. But before that happens there is... more or less nothing. Ten seconds pass. (The man sweeps.) Thirty seconds. (Still sweeping.) A minute. (Sweeping on.) Two minutes. On and on, until finally the phone rings and time, unfrozen at last, moves forward.

Why is this so magical to watch, when it could so easily be tedious and pointless and affected? Kyle MacLachlan—who sits at the center of the show, playing three characters—watched this scene, as well as every other moment in the series, every week on TV just like the rest of us, at home on Sunday nights. (He is married, with a young son, but he preferred to watch it alone.) And like the rest of us, he has his own theories on what David Lynch is up to.

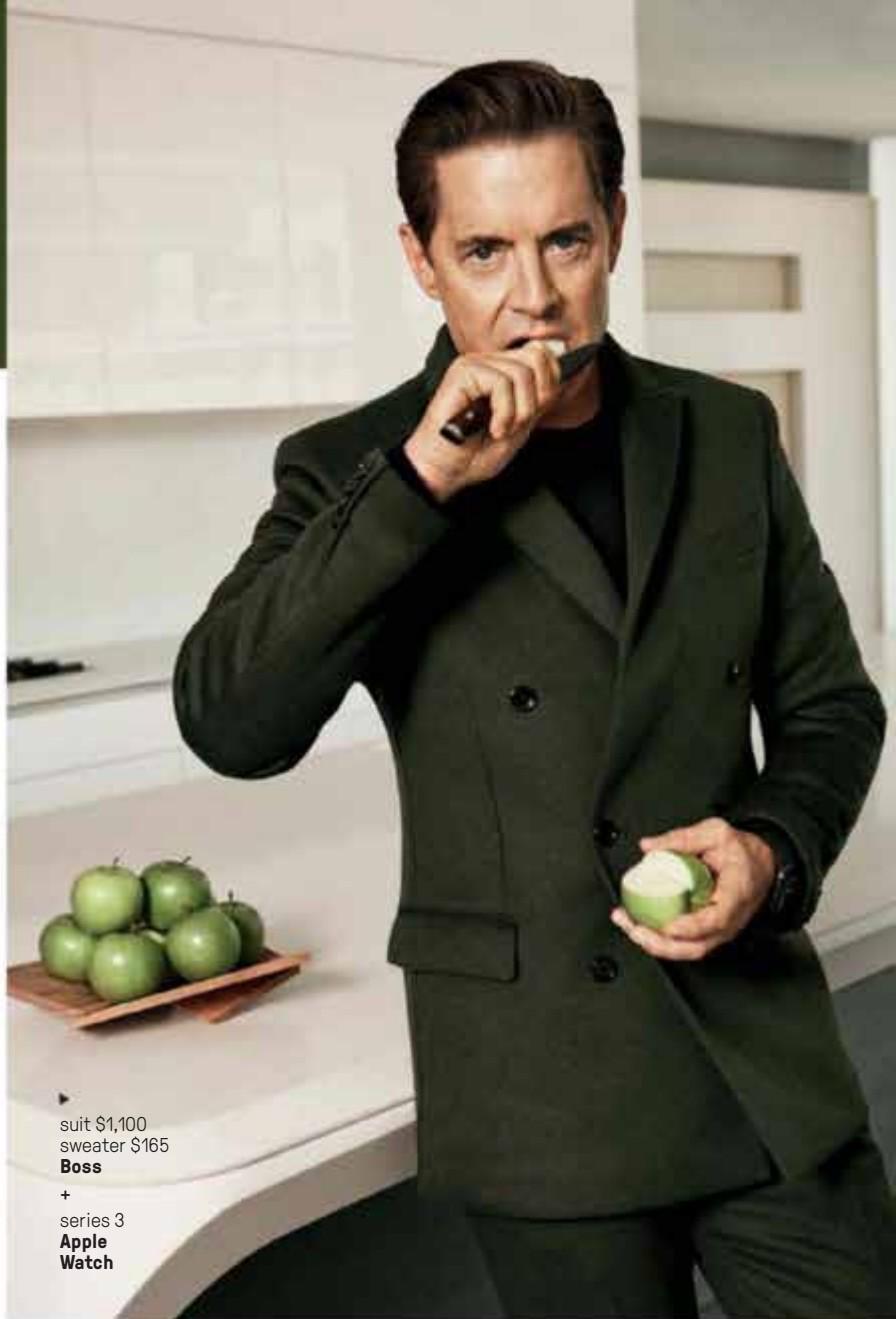
"So you're waiting," MacLachlan says. "And you *know* you're waiting. And you're like, 'Oh, maybe he's extending this moment because there's actually something in what I'm seeing right now that I should be paying more attention to.' And then you're waiting a little longer, [until you're] like, 'No, that's not it either.' In your mind you're jumping ahead, and he's asking you *not* to jump ahead. He's asking you to stay right here and just enjoy this moment. You know, like, Cooper has that great expression, 'Give yourself a present?' It's like, 'Oh, just give yourself a present.' Of just relaxing and watching this guy sweep for a few minutes. Just relax and enjoy that. Then, '...Okay, did you have a little break?'"

MacLachlan chuckles.

"Sometimes I think that's what he's doing."

Do you think when he does something like that he privately thinks it's hilarious?

"Yeah. Oh yeah. But it's not just a toss-off. There's a reason for everything. Whether it serves the story or not."



►
suit \$1,100
sweater \$165
Boss
+
series 3
Apple Watch

And because of moments like this—along with many others, some of them deeply disturbing—what David Lynch does on your TV screen may not be suited for a weekend marathon.

"It's not kind of a binge-y show," MacLachlan says. "It's just so much to mull over after you see one episode. You can binge *Twin Peaks*, but your brain's going to explode."

In a sense, Kyle MacLachlan is another of David Lynch's great inventions. He had never appeared on-screen when Lynch plucked him from nowhere-ish (Yakima, Washington) to be the blossom-haired lead in the 1984 science fiction debacle *Dune*. Then, undeterred by *Dune*'s failure, Lynch gave MacLachlan his breakthrough role within the transgressive magnificence of *Blue Velvet*. And after that, most crucially of all, Lynch chose MacLachlan to be Special Agent Dale Cooper, the disconcertingly perky FBI agent—a man

forever resolute in the face of whatever surreal weirdness he might encounter in the world of *Twin Peaks*.

For the past quarter of a century, MacLachlan has had to find his own way without Lynch, mostly in episodic TV of every kind (*Sex and the City*, *Desperate Housewives*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.*, *Portlandia*) punctuated by scattershot movie credits. Until two years ago, when Lynch summoned him to a New York hotel for a cup of coffee and told MacLachlan it was time to come home.

"I guess for a number of years I've been just swimming along at a certain rate and enjoying the currents and the eddies," MacLachlan muses. "And suddenly the river's got a little faster. It's rushing, and I'm trying to keep up."

CHRIS HEATH is a GQ correspondent.

ABOUT
THIS
SHOOT

We knew we wanted to finish 2017 with a big story celebrating this new breed of suits—the kind you might wear if you have a creative-class job like, say, an architect. So it only made sense to shoot in a brilliant new building by a master of the form. Right up until she died last year, Zaha Hadid was one of my all-time favorites. Walking down the High Line on the West Side of Manhattan, I would watch her experimental condominium taking shape at 520 West 28th Street and think to myself, "I gotta get in there." So we took the idea to Kyle: Wear the suits of the moment in the building of the year. He loved the concept. And the way he wears the clothes (with Chelsea boots and totally un-corporate underpinnings) feels just as modern as the space itself.

—JIM MOORE,
GQ CREATIVE DIRECTOR



suit \$2,695
shirt \$745
tie \$235

Dolce & Gabbana

+
boots \$400

Paul Evans
bag \$980

Gucci

suit \$2,095
Canali

+
shirt \$795
bag \$3,290

Tom Ford

boots \$698
John Varvatos

iPhone X
Apple

camera (on bed)
Leica Q

glasses
Moscot

hair by thom priano
for r+co. haircare.
grooming by kumi
craig using la mer.
set design by cooper
vasquez for the
magnet agency.
produced by vivian
song at kranky
productions.

where to buy it?
go to the fashion
directories on gq.com





▼
Superhero

GAL Next Door

WONDER WOMAN has been with us for decades, but 2017 was the year she finally got the blockbuster she deserved—and now **GAL GADOT**, the actual ex-Israeli soldier who played her, is Wonder Woman forever. **Caitlyn Jenner** hits the beaches of Tel Aviv with Gadot and her many (many) fans

THE DAY I MEET Wonder Woman by the seaside is a perfect beach day, bounded on either side by chains of perfect beach days. The sun is splendid. The sky is a show-off blue. The people of Israel are wearing white sneakers and performing vigorous calisthenics in the free fitness parks that stipple the Tel Aviv shoreline in primary colors. The water is as warm and as salty as a basin of tears. The egg sandwich is unexpected.

Wonder Woman has brought me the egg sandwich wrapped in cellophane and, upon our meeting, delivers it to me as confidently as if I had specifically requested it. She also packed me a fluffy white bath towel from her own home. Wonder Woman is used to taking care of everything because she is the protector of mankind.

Here in the real world, Wonder Woman is Gal Gadot, and today Gal Gadot arrives at the beach wearing a couture black swimsuit that boasts leather accents; a deep, plunging neckline; and a field's worth of laser-cut and embroidered flowers and leaves. It's a bathing costume designed to be worn more in theory than in practice, yet it also seems to function as Gadot's casual swimwear for bumming around. I recognize it from a recent Instagram post of Gadot in a pool with friends. When I mention this, she contorts her face in mock misery: "I cannot believe I wore the same swimsuit twice!"

She is spotted. She is spotted over and over again, probably a dozen times before we leave the beach. She obliges virtually every picture request, perhaps calculating that it will take longer to disappoint a fan than to smile and pose. Her trick is to say "Thanks!" the instant

a photo has been taken—her polite signal that the interaction has concluded.

It's already hotter than a charcoal grill in an attic on the sun, but at 10 A.M., the beach's population is scant enough that everyone can fit within the cool gray squares of shade provided by a smattering of tented canopies. The catch is that you have to share your square with strangers, which is why Gadot and I are joined first by an old man and, a little later, by a woman in her late 50s, who sits behind Gadot and faces the sea. How do the logistics of personal safety change when you abruptly become a global public figure?

"I'm much more aware and alert," Gadot says, stretching out on the sand. "I don't want to exclude myself from society. I want to be part of everyone, and I enjoy talking to random people sometimes. It's easier for me here [in Israel], 'cause profiling people is really easy for me." She gestures toward a group of about 20 young people in a cabana.

"Like, I can tell you that this group—they're good people. They're calm, nice. They're gonna clean after themselves when they leave. They don't look for trouble." She jerks her head back. "This woman," she says in the same breezy tone, "is probably from Russia."

The sea-facing woman, who has been out of Gadot's line of sight since she sat down—I'm not even sure when Gadot saw her—has short blonde hair and a blue bathing suit. Nothing about her demeanor brings visions of the Bolshoi to mind.

"Why do you think that?" I ask.

"I just know," Gadot says with a shrug. "I just know."

(Later, as we're packing up to leave, the woman makes a call on her cell phone. "What language is she speaking?" Gadot asks, but she knows the answer—she just wants me to notice. The woman is speaking Russian.)

The truth is that Gadot is not just alert, but hyper-alert. Her relaxed, casual manner belies a sharp awareness of strangers' proximity in public. Whenever she senses someone approaching, she falls still and quiet, like a swimmer bracing for a wave. At one point during our conversation, she abruptly wheels around, catching off guard both myself and two women slowly picking their way through the sand to approach her from behind. "Wow, girls!" she calls out, beaming brightly. "I'm just in the middle of an interview. Could you come back?" They smile, and back away.

When Wonder Woman made her debut in 2016's critically abhorred *Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice*, she vivified scenes as if she had defibrillator paddles strapped to her high heels. Based on fewer than ten minutes of screen time, Gal Gadot was hailed as the savior of the DC cinematic universe, and so it was a rare instance of the best-laid plans actually turning out to be the best-laid plans when Wonder Woman's



stand-alone film—a prequel set a century before the events of *Batman v. Superman*, during World War I—began annihilating box-office records this past summer: highest-grossing superhero movie led by a female character, highest-grossing live-action film directed by a woman, highest-grossing fantasy that also educates teens about the horrifying realities of trench warfare.

The reviews for *Wonder Woman* glowed with the blinding luminosity of a CGI Lasso of Truth. Audiences were delighted that a story about chemical weapons had so much



heart. The timing also helped, coming, as it did, on the heels of a female presidential candidate's staggering loss to a hectoring sexist. Prior to the film's release, hands were wrung into mangled mounds as people worried that men might not like a superhero if she wasn't also a man. Gadot's Wonder Woman was brutal with Germans and gentle with babies. She was dignified and occasionally deadpan funny. She was relentlessly, mercilessly charming. It turns out men like that stuff, too.

Gadot was the face of this summer's biggest movie, but even now little is known

about her, apart from a small collection of facts: Gal Gadot, now 32, won the Miss Israel pageant in 2004. Gal Gadot completed two years of service in the Israeli Defense Forces (mandatory for Israeli citizens). Gal Gadot went to law school for a year. A beauty-pageant soldier with a cunning legal mind? Kind of sounds like Wonder Woman.

I ask Gadot if she is the most famous person in Israel who is not currently running Israel.

She considers the question for a moment, then answers in an even tone. "Probably."

GADOT GREW UP in the water—*gal* is Hebrew for “wave”—and after an hour of talking on the beach, she suggests we go for a swim. A few moments later, there is Gal Gadot, floating in the lapis blue Mediterranean, eyes closed, with her face turned up to the dazzling noon sun, and also, uh, me. Little fish flick silently around her body. “Tell me what you like to eat,” she purrs, breaking the calm quiet of passing swells. Then she springs her observation trap: “BECAUSE I NOTICE YOU DID NOT EAT THE EGG SANDWICH THAT I BROUGHT YOU.”



“

I fought my accent for so long. Like, I gotta sound more American. Until I let it go. My dialect coach told me, ‘As long as you’re clear and understood, own it.’ And since I’ve started to own it, I feel free.”

I am dumbstruck. I have been pretending, I thought convincingly, to eat the egg sandwich since we got here.

Back on dry land, the air is so warm that it towels you off. Once out of the water, I have a request: I want Wonder Woman to put her six months of defense training to use by taking me down. She enumerates all the ways it can go wrong. She’s worried I’ll get hurt—“I put you down, you’re like, ‘Oh, my back! Oh, my God!’” She insists that I won’t know how to fall properly. She doesn’t want people to think she is prone to random acts of violence.

I propose she teach me a different move: the slow-motion power saunter Wonder Woman unleashes when single-handedly taking on a German platoon in order to save some members of the Belgian peasant class. It’s the first time viewers see Wonder Woman in full battle regalia, and it kicks off a sequence that lays bare the essence of her character: She’s alone, fearlessly charging a line of men with weapons, deflecting their stupid bullets with her bracelets. Fans refer to this reverently as “the No-Man’s-Land scene.”

Gadot scrunches up her face, as though the idea of sand strutting pains her. “Okay,” she agrees. “But you have to write in the article that”—here Gal switches to my perspective, dictating my entire paragraph, so I’ll just give you what she tells me to write—“Gal felt really awkward being pushed to teaching me how to walk the walk of the no-man’s-man—no-man’s-man? Haha!—no-man’s-land. And she was really, really feeling awkward doing it, but since she was the hostess, she figured she’ll cut me some slack and da da da.”

She strides across the hot sand, shoulders back, shifting her weight from hip to hip, ready to take on a German platoon, ready to march all the way to the beach parking lot if she has to, until she is interrupted by a man who would like a photo, please.



GADOT’S GRASP OF English is strong, if not quite a death grip. Her words often come out sounding faintly connected, like they’re all coated with honey and sticking together. Hebrew is her first language; her

school instruction in English began in third grade, but she didn’t really focus on mastering it until she wanted to watch *Seinfeld* and *Friends*. In speech, she sometimes translates Hebrew idioms into English ones that don’t exist, which gives her conversation a poetic flair. (Her description of acting: “It’s going with but feeling without. Do you have this term?” We should.) American English has more vowel phonemes than Hebrew, which means lines sometimes require Gadot to produce sounds that don’t exist in her native language. This can lead to confusion; at the emotional climax of *Wonder Woman*, our heroine unleashes an anguished cry of “Stiv!” to the heavens while witnessing an incident that imperils her boyfriend, Steve.

“I fought my accent for so long,” she says. “Like, I gotta sound more American. I was a little bit shy about my accent. Until I let it go. My dialect coach told me, ‘As long as you’re clear and understood, own it.’ And since I’ve started to own it, I feel free.”

A native grasp of English is not a requirement in Hollywood—Sofia Vergara is TV’s highest-paid actress—but having a foreign accent limits the roles you’ll be offered. In her pre-*Wonder Woman* American film career, Gadot played a spy, a former spy, the wife of a spy, a henchwoman, a member of a Jewish Mob family, and a sexy woman who, in the words of another character, “is Israeli” and “doesn’t speak much English.”

The most distinctive characteristic of Gadot’s voice, however, is not her accent but its perpetual deep raspiness—a mesmerizing quality that makes it sound like she’s just rolled out of bed at all times.

“When I was a girl,” she says in between sips of coffee with extra sugar syrup, “I went to speech therapy because I had a rusty voice. I used to lose my voice very easily. They taught me how to breathe, ‘cause I was not breathing right.”

“It’s funny to imagine a little kid with such a husky, sensual voice,” I say.

She cocks an eyebrow and playfully lowers her voice until it is practically dragging on the ground: “Do you want to play hide-and-seek?” I dissolve in laughter. She leans in close to whisper in my ear: “Come find me.”

GAL GADOT IS VERY hands-on. As in, when you meet her, she will put her hands on you many times, in many different places. She might wordlessly reach out to brush a crumb off your face while you are eating, or lightly rest her palm on your thigh for half a minute while she tells you a story. Even as *Wonder Woman* sequels and spin-offs propel Gadot to new heights of global stardom, she probably will not lose this habit of touching, because she is a charming, beautiful woman, and it will never occur to people to shrink away from her.

The next day at her neighborhood bakery, Gadot patiently translates literally the entire menu for me, without skipping any items. “This is mushroom quiche, sweet-potato quiche, tomato-and-olives quiche, pretzel, cinnamon pretzel, pistachio-chocolate Danish, raspberry Danish, vanilla-and-raisins Danish, chocolate brioche, almond-chocolate brioche, just almond brioche, chocolate croissant, butter croissant, chocolate-and-almond croissant, which is *wow...*” It takes a few minutes. The employees talk to her about yeast. Her hot husband swings by and kisses her on the lips. She has a long conversation with the son of a neighbor, regarding fish.

“I’m sorry!” she groans in between catch-ups.

“It’s like your *Cheers*,” I tell her. Everybody here *does* know her name.

She laughs and corrects me: “It’s *L’chaim!*”

We depart before any more people Gadot loves can show up, then round a corner onto her gently sloping home street and into her stone courtyard. It’s time for us to part, but I have a lingering regret from yesterday: I never got to take on Wonder Woman in hand-to-hand combat. I make a final plea.

“You’re very embarrassing,” she says, smiling.

“We have total privacy.”

“I knew it was a mistake.” Gadot raises her eyes dramatically skyward, but she is already bracing for my attack.

This is what happens when you attempt to ambush Wonder Woman: The instant your hands fall upon her, she’s already holding them—your hands are her hands now. The next second is a blur, with several feats occurring in such breakneck succession they seem simultaneous: Wonder Woman swaps places with you, your body goes earthward, and your arms get trapped by hers, forcing you to crumple over. You can’t see what she’s doing because, somehow, inexplicably, your glasses are no longer on your face and have resurfaced in Wonder Woman’s hands. You are at Wonder Woman’s mercy.

“Then,” she coos in a rasping singsong, pulling you backward into a cuddle, cradling you as gently as a dove she wishes to immobilize, “I give her...a *huuuug!*”

CAITY WEAVER is a GQ writer and editor.

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MOTY



▼
Agitator

■ SEAN FLYNN

■ NADAV KANDER

Putin Enemy No.1

THE HARROWING TALE OF **BILL BROWDER**—how an American-born businessman became an enemy of the Russian state, how he has to live in constant fear, never knowing if the long arm of the Kremlin will snatch him, or kill him—is its own kind of daily terror. But what Browder’s story tells us about the way Vladimir Putin operates, and what he might want from this country, should scare us all



WILLIAM BROWDER TOOK HIS FAMILY on vacation in July, though he won't say where because that is one of those extraneous bits of personal information that could, in a roundabout way, get him bundled off to a Siberian prison or, possibly, killed. For eight years, he's been jamming up the gears of Vladimir Putin's kleptocratic machine, a job that seems to often end in jail or death, both of which he'd very much like to avoid. He'll concede, at least, that his leisure travels took him from London, where he lives, through Chicago, where he changed planes. As he walked through a terminal at O'Hare, he got a call from a *New York Times* reporter named Jo Becker.

"Do you know anything," she asked, "about a Russian lawyer named Natalia Veselnitskaya?"

Browder stopped short. "Yes," he said. "I know a lot about her."

One of the most important things he knew was that Veselnitskaya had spent many dollars and many hours trying to convince Washington that Browder is a criminal. More than a decade ago, Browder was the largest individual foreign investor in Russia, managing billions in his hedge fund. Then, in 2009, one of his attorneys was tortured to death in a Moscow jail after exposing a massive tax fraud committed by Russian gangsters. His name was Sergei Magnitsky, and Browder has spent the years since trying to hold accountable anyone connected to Sergei's death. The most significant way is through the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, a 2012 U.S. law that freezes the assets and cripples the travel of specific Russians, many of whom have allegedly laundered millions of dollars in the West.

The Kremlin hates that law. Putin's hold on power requires the loyalty of dozens of wealthy oligarchs, and thousands of complicit functionaries, and their loyalty, in turn, requires Putin to protect the cash they've stashed overseas. Putin hates the law so much that he retaliated by banning Americans from adopting Russian

children—yes, by *holding orphans hostage*—and has said that overturning the Magnitsky Act is a top priority.

That's where Veselnitskaya comes in. As a lawyer, she represented a Russian businessman trying to recover \$14 million frozen by the Magnitsky Act. More important, she was involved in an extensive 2016 lobbying and public-relations campaign to weaken or eliminate the act, in large part by recasting Browder as a villain who conned Congress into passing it. That was not empty political spin for an American audience: The Russians really do want Browder in prison. In 2013, a Russian court convicted him in absentia (and Sergei in his grave) of the very crime Sergei uncovered and sentenced Browder to nine years in prison. Later, it got worse. In April 2016, Russian authorities accused Browder of *murdering* Sergei—that is, of killing the person on whose behalf Browder had been crusading and who the Russians for seven years had insisted was not, in fact, murdered.

The campaign was oafish yet persistent enough that Browder thought it wise to compile a 26-page presentation on the people behind it. Veselnitskaya appears on five of those pages.

"I've been trying to get someone to write this goddamned story," Browder told Becker on July 8. "She's not just some private lawyer. She's a tool of the Russian government."

But why, Browder wanted to know, was Becker suddenly interested?

"I can't tell you," she said. "But I think you'll be interested in a few hours."

Browder flew off to the place he won't name, switched on his phone, and scrolled to the *Times* website. He drew in a sharp breath.

TRUMP TEAM MET WITH LAWYER LINKED TO KREMLIN DURING CAMPAIGN.

He exhaled. *Fuck.*

Donald Trump Jr. told the *Times* that the June 9, 2016, meeting had been about adoptions, which demonstrated either how out of his depth he was or how stupid he thought reporters were. If Veselnitskaya had been talking about adoption, she of course had been talking about the Magnitsky Act.

Which meant she'd also been talking about Bill Browder.

He read the story again, closely. Browder wasn't sure what the implications were. But if he'd known about it in real time—that the staff of a major-party presidential candidate was listening intently to those who accuse him of murder and want him extradited and imprisoned—he would have been terrified.

Browder did not say this as if it were a revelation. (And technically it's an *allegation* that Putin has people killed, albeit one so thoroughly supported by evidence and circumstance that no one credibly disputes it.) Rather, he told me that by way of explaining why he was telling me anything at all: The more often and publicly he tells the story of Sergei Magnitsky, the less likely he'll be to get poisoned or shot or tossed out a window, which has happened to a number of Putin's critics. If anything does happen to him, he reasons, the list of suspects would be short.

He spoke softly, methodically, though with great efficiency; not scripted, but well practiced. We were in the conference room of his offices in London. Afternoon light washed through a wall of windows, threw bright highlights onto his scalp, sparked off the frame of his glasses. Browder is 53 years old, medium build, medium height, medium demeanor, and was wearing a medium-blue suit. He does not look like a threat to Russian national security, which the Kremlin declared him to be 12 years ago. Still, there is a hint of steel, something hard and sharp beneath all of the mediumness; if he confessed that he'd served in the Special Forces, it would be a little surprising but not shocking.

It was late September, and Donald Trump had been president for 248 days. In the weeks after the election, Browder was "worried and confused." Trump has a creepy habit of praising Putin, but he'd also surrounded himself with Russia hard-liners like General James Mattis, Nikki Haley, and Mike Pompeo—secretary of defense, ambassador to the United Nations, and director of the CIA, respectively. Browder war-gamed the Magnitsky Act but didn't see any way that Trump could kill it—Congress would have to repeal the law—only a chance that he might refuse to add more names to the target list. (Five people were added to the list last January, bringing the total to 44.) He figured the same was true with the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which President Obama signed shortly before leaving office, expanding the targeted-sanctions tool to human-rights abusers worldwide. The Russians hate that law, too, because having "Magnitsky" in the title reminds the entire planet where the standard was set and by whom.

"PUTIN KILLS PEOPLE," Browder said to me one afternoon this autumn. "That's a known fact. But Putin likes to pretend that he doesn't kill people. So he tends to kill people he can get away with killing."

In many ways, Bill Browder is the Rosetta stone for decoding the curious relationship between the Trumps and the Russians.

The first months of the new administration unspooled, spring into summer. Trump's flirtation with Putin persisted, but with no practical effect. "The Russians got nothing," Browder said. Congress, in fact, imposed its own sanctions on Russia for meddling in the 2016 election, cutting Trump out of the loop entirely. "I watch this like a hawk," Browder said, "and so far they've gotten nothing. There's not a single piece of Russian policy that's gone Putin's way."

But then, in July, the *Times* reported that Veselnitskaya had met with Trump Jr., Jared Kushner, and Paul Manafort, Trump's campaign manager at the time, in June 2016. That shifted the calculus. "America has been my staunchest ally," Browder said. "It wasn't an assumption, but a question: Had they flipped my biggest ally?"

That was still an open question when we met in London. Much more had been reported about Trump and Russia. Other contacts and communications were known, and details kept evolving, an endless, sloppy churn of information. There was more, too, about the meeting with Veselnitskaya, which happened two weeks after Trump secured the nomination: It was attended by eight people in all, including Rinat Akhmetshin, who is usually described as a former Russian military-intelligence officer, though that generously assumes that any Russian spook is ever fully retired from the spy game. Browder has another PowerPoint presentation on him. Additionally, Manafort's notes on the meeting reportedly mentioned Browder by name.

This is all bad. "They were in a meeting to discuss Bill Browder, the Magnitsky Act, and how to get the Magnitsky Act repealed," he said. "Now, what [the Russians] were offering in return, we don't know. But if it had just been a courtesy meeting, only one of [the Trump team] would have showed up."

Maybe no one will ever know what, if anything, the Russians offered. But there's no doubt what they wanted, and how badly. In a four-page memo prepared for the meeting by Veselnitskaya (and later obtained by *Foreign Policy*), the Magnitsky Act was inspired by "a fugitive criminal" who ripped off the Russian treasury and then went on a worldwide publicity tour to, apparently, cover it up. "Using the grief of the family of Magnitsky to his own advantage, Browder exposes them as a human shield to distract attention from the details of his own crime," she wrote. Passage of the Magnitsky Act, moreover, marked "the beginning of a new round of the Cold War."

That is an assertion as grandiose as it is belligerent. And yet it is not wholly inaccurate. To understand why the Kremlin is so perturbed, it helps to understand Bill Browder. In many ways, he is the Rosetta stone for decoding the curious relationship between the Trumps and the Russians.

 Bill Browder testifies in July before the Senate Judiciary Committee about the use of propaganda by Russian operatives.



BROWDER'S GRANDFATHER Earl was a Communist. He started as a union organizer in Kansas and spent some time in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, where he married a Jewish intellectual and had the first of his three sons, Felix. The family moved to Yonkers in 1932, where Earl became secretary general of the Communist Party USA. He ran for president twice, in 1936 and 1940, and *Time* magazine put him on its cover in 1938 above the headline **COMRADE EARL BROWDER**. His fortunes fell in 1941, when he was convicted of passport fraud. His four-year sentence was commuted after 14 months, and he was released into relative obscurity until the 1950s, when he was harassed by the House Un-American Activities Committee.

Bill's grandmother steered her boys away from politics and toward academics, in which they wildly overachieved. Felix enrolled at M.I.T. at the age of 16, graduated in two years, and had a Princeton Ph.D. in math when he was 20. He met his wife, Eva, at M.I.T., a Jewish girl who'd fled Vienna ahead of the Nazis and spent her teenage years in a tenement with her impoverished mother.

Felix and Eva had two boys. Their first, Thomas, took after his father: University of Chicago at 15, doctoral student in physics at 19. Their second, Bill, did not. He liked to ski and smoke and drink. He got kicked out of a second-tier boarding school and barely got into the University of Colorado, which was fine with him because it was a notorious party school. By his account, he spent his formative years rebelling against everything his leftist-intellectual family held sacred.

"Rejecting school was a good start, but if I really wanted to upset my parents, then I would have to come up with something else," he wrote in his 2015 book, *Red Notice: A True Story of High Finance, Murder, and One Man's Fight for Justice*. "Then, toward the end of high school, it hit me. I would put on a

suit and tie and become a capitalist. Nothing would piss off my family more than that."

He started studying, transferred to the University of Chicago, got into a two-year pre-MBA program at Bain & Company, in Boston. He parlayed that and an essay about Comrade Earl Browder—from Communist to capitalist in two generations!—into a seat at Stanford. Out of genealogical curiosity, he began thinking about Eastern Europe. "If that's where my grandfather had carved out his niche," he wrote, "then maybe I could, too." He got a job with a consulting firm and moved to London in August 1989. Three months later, the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union crumbled. Eastern Europe was wide open for business.

His first account was consulting for a Polish bus manufacturer that was bleeding cash. It was miserable work in a miserable little city, but while he was there his translator explained the financial tables in the local newspaper. With the fall of Communism, nationalized companies were being privatized and their stocks were offered at fire-sale prices: A company with \$160 million in profits the previous year had a stock valuation of only \$80 million.

Browder invested his entire savings, \$2,000, in Polish stocks. He eventually walked away with \$20,000. He'd found his niche.

By 1993, he was in Moscow, investing in staggeringly undervalued stocks: He invested \$25 million and turned a \$100 million profit. With money that good and almost no Western competition, Browder, in 1996, raised enough cash to open his own fund, Hermitage Capital.

Over the next decade, Hermitage did exceptionally well. The downside, though, was that the economy wasn't transitioning from Communism to capitalism so much as it was devolving into gangsterism. Corruption was endemic. A handful of oligarchs looted and swindled at their leisure. Browder countered by positioning (*continued on page 182*)



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MOTY

Movie-Star Looks

ARMIE HAMMER, star of Oscar hopeful *Call Me by Your Name*, wears the five fashion trends that rocked our world in 2017

■ PEGGY SIROTA

A CORDUROY SUIT WITH POP

Slim cuts (and surprising colors, like this mossy green) give the new breed of fine-wale cords a little extra fizz.

suit jacket \$3,420
pants \$930
Tom Ford

+

shirt \$640
tie \$225
Tom Ford

watch
IWC



BRANDO'S SHEARLING

Woolly coats are warm enough to wear over nothing but a T-shirt—and so badass that you look cool just carrying one.

jacket \$1,995
Polo Ralph Lauren

+
t-shirt \$55
jeans \$90
Polo Ralph Lauren

boots (these pages) \$1,495
Christian Louboutin

sunglasses and belt
Tom Ford

location
Top Round Roast Beef, Los Angeles





► **DESIGNER
WESTERN**

In his first year with Calvin Klein, European super-designer Raf Simons miraculously transformed westernwear into something cosmopolitan.

shirt \$550
pants \$850
Calvin Klein
205W39NYC

+
cowboy hat
Stetson at
JJ Hat Center

watch
Montblanc

bracelet (mirror)
David Yurman

location
**Baldwin Hills Motor
Inn, Los Angeles**



A

ARMIE HAMMER HAS difficulty disappearing into roles. "I'm six five, two twenty, and there's two of me" was the line in *The Social Network*, when we were introduced to him in double, as the Winklevi. And though there's been only one Armie in everything since, there's an overt *there-ness* that comes with the height and the hair and the voice—riply round and 10 percent over-loud and thick the way whole milk is thick. That embossed presence, frame-filling and sticky-outy, is the whole point in Luca Guadagnino's *Call Me by Your Name*, in which Armie's Oliver serves as an object of infatuation.

CMBYN is the great-looking and perfectly put-together adaptation of André Aciman's 2007 novel about the unlikely affair between the 17-year-old son of an American professor

and the 24-year-old graduate student who spends six weeks one summer at their Italian home. Let's set the use of the word "sumptuous" by reviewers at 93. There's a bunch of fruit. There's color and sound. Saturated new-wave reds and blues and yellows of wet swimming shorts drip-drying in the tub. Bent ears searching for the creaking floorboards of approaching footsteps. It's air you're happy to breathe. And it's exactly the sort of thing Armie set out to find in the wake of more formfitting action films like *The Lone Ranger* and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* When those didn't hit the way they were meant to, it cracked open an opportunity: "This feels like we're trying to manufacture something that's false," he says he said. "I got so fed up and frustrated that I was like, 'I want to do something tiny. I want to drive to set because they can't afford to give me an airplane ticket.'"

On surface, Armie seems like a counter-programmed casting choice for *CMBYN*. But Oliver, as drawn in the novel, exhibits a mix of qualities (an American's confidence, an intellectual's sensitivity, a classical masculinity) that make him uniquely right. I often mistake height for handsomeness. But I can report that in this case he's as stupidly good-looking as he seems, antiquated in the original sense of the word, a combo of bone planes and hair grooves that permit him to play almost any handsome male from the past hundred years. This movie so happens to be set in 1983, but it works up and down

the 20th-century spectrum. He is the movie person who not only plays from another era but looks plucked from it, too.

"What's up, dude?" he says when he sits down at the bar with me. Not a surfer's indifference, but legitimately expectant, a little earnest. He seems to want to know. He grew up on an island in the Caribbean, even though he looks like he should've been captaining the ski team at a day school in Denver. He comes from L.A. mega-money but spends time in Texas, too, where he and his wife have a bakery business. ("Like they say, variety is the spice of life.") And now he's close to being known for a steady presence in those squeakier-budgeted films he's had his sights set on. A film like *CMBYN* has the potential to ratify the pivot, to say for good that it's okay for Armie Hammer to not have to wear a cape or watch Johnny Depp pretend to be a Comanche ever again.

But he knows better than to count his escape into art-affirming indiedom before it fully sets. "I'm like, 'Everyone shut up, shut up, calm down, wait for the other shoe to drop,'" he says, alluding to the debacle with *The Birth of a Nation* last year—another festival favorite he starred in, that one felled by controversy. "I don't want to say PTSD, but I'm super gun-shy. I look at everyone and say, 'You don't have any skeletons in your closet, right?'"

If it works, he might get what he seems to want most: to be the oversize fish in any number of small, sumptuous ponds.—DANIEL RILEY

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The Breakouts 2017

THE SCENE-STEALERS (and killer clowns) of the year show off the fashion steals (and killer trends) of the year

BILLY KIDD



Sofia Boutella

AGE: 35

BREAKOUT ROLES:

As an unseasoned spy in *Atomic Blonde*; as a mummy who happens to be the only lifelike entity in otherwise lifeless blockbuster *The Mummy*.

HOW'D BOUTELLA GET SO TOUGH? Growing up in Algeria during its civil war. "You would have a bomb exploding every once in a while," she says. "There would be water once a week. There was no butter, no bread, no bananas, no candy at the shops."

WHAT DID SHE DO WHEN SHE GOT TO AMERICA?

Boutella was a professional dancer for Nike, Michael Jackson, and Madonna before quitting to pursue acting full-time.

HOW DOES MADONNA REACT WHEN AN EMPLOYEE GIVES NOTICE?

"She said, 'Do you have jobs? A movie?' 'No, I have nothing.' 'What if you don't work the next eight months?'—which is the length of the tour. I said, 'Even if it takes two years, I know I have to do it.' It took two years to get *Kingsman*."

WHAT'S NEXT: Teaming up with Mike and Mike (B. Jordan and Shannon) in *Fahrenheit 451*; starring with Jeff Goldblum and Jodie Foster in sci-fi movie *Hotel Artemis*.

—CLAY SKIPPER

◀
jacket (men's)
Guess

golden jewelry
Jillian Dempsey
choker and gloves, vintage
boots
Aldo

Jonathan Groff

AGE: 32

WHERE YOU'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE: On HBO's *Looking*; as dopey King George in the original Broadway cast of *Hamilton*.

BREAKOUT ROLE: As a serial-killer-hunting FBI agent on David Fincher's Netflix series *Mindhunter*.

WHAT'S IT LIKE

WORKING WITH

FINCHER? "David does lots of dark stuff—men talking about cutting off women's heads. But at the same time, he has this black sense of humor that makes it palatable."

WHAT FINCHER HAS TO SAY ABOUT ALL THAT HILARIOUS SERIAL

KILLING: "At a certain point, talking about dismemberment gets too serious, and things get silly—the actors would be trapped in a car, tears streaming down their faces, bright red, howling with laughter. It was like, 'The crew may now leave the stage while we wait for Silly Time to end.'"

WHAT WOULD GROFF WANT HIS SERIAL-KILLER NAME TO BE?

"The Mennonite Murderer." (His dad was in the church.)

"Seemingly pure but totally diabolical."

WHAT'S NEXT: Hopefully more *Mindhunter*.

—BENJY HANSEN-BUNDY

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Daniel Kaluuya

AGE: 28

BREAKOUT ROLE:

As a man meeting his girlfriend's parents in Jordan Peele's "woke white people might

actually be scarier than murderous clowns" horror movie *Get Out*.

HOW DID PEELE KNOW HE'D FOUND HIS LEADING MAN?

"It was very important in this movie that the protagonist feels like the smartest guy in the room. Otherwise you would just be annoyed."

WAS KALUUYA EVER

WORRIED ABOUT MAKING

A FUNNY HORROR MOVIE

ABOUT RACE? "Racial

relations are still kind of taboo. So you're just kind of like, '*Get Out* is going to do something.'

WHEN HE KNEW 'GET OUT'

WAS A BIG DEAL: "Nas

Instagrammed it. That

made my head explode. Nas Escobar? Nasty Nas? Nas?! That's crazy."

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO

BE A MEME? "I hear the term 'sunken place' when I'm just casually living my life."

WHAT'S NEXT? Starring

opposite Lupita Nyong'o in Ryan Coogler's Marvel

movie *Black Panther*,

and Viola Davis

and Liam Neeson in Steve McQueen's heist film *Widows*.

DAMN. Yup! "It was in the space of, like, a week when I got calls from Ryan and Steve. It was a cool fucking week." —ZACH BARON

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Timothée Chalamet

AGE: 21

BREAKOUT ROLES: As the teenage seducer of Armie Hammer (see page 148) in Luca Guadagnino's coming-of-age romance

Call Me by Your Name; as the worst person to lose one's virginity to in Greta Gerwig's *Lady Bird*.

HOW YOU'LL KNOW HIM SOON: The peach scene.

WHAT PEACH SCENE? The one in *Call Me by Your Name*, in which Chalamet turns a peach into his, uh, *objet d'affection*.

HUH! "It feels not like a marketing gimmick," he says about the man-on-fruit sex scene, "but in service to the story. And something that people are genuinely curious to see—if they have not already partaken in that wonderfully sensual experience."

WHAT'S NEXT? Kissing Selena Gomez in Woody Allen's next film; starring as Steve Carell's son in addiction drama *Beautiful Boy*.

HOW 'LADY BIRD' DIRECTOR GRETA GERWIG DESCRIBES HIM: "Imagine a young Christian Bale crossed

with a young Daniel Day-Lewis, with a sprinkle of young Leonardo DiCaprio. Then raise them speaking French in Manhattan and give them a Mensa-level IQ and a love of hip-hop." **AND WOODY ALLEN'S ASSESSMENT?** "He's more Jesse Eisenberg than Jim Belushi." —BRENNAN CARLEY

Bill Skarsgård

AGE: 27

WAIT...SKARSGÅRD?

Yes, he's related to Swedish acting royalty Alexander (his brother) and Stellan (his father).

BREAKOUT ROLES:

As an East German activist in *Atomic Blonde*; as a balloon-wielding, child-stealing clown in *It*.

WHAT YOU WEAR

TO A KILLER-CLOWN

AUDITION: "It's such a metaphor for what it is to be an actor in L.A., driving in clown face down Hollywood Boulevard."

THE QUESTION HE'S

SICK OF ANSWERING: "How long did the makeup take?"

WELL? "Two and a half hours."

WHAT SCARES YOU,

BILL? "In Stockholm in December, the night just swallows the day whole, and you're just left in darkness for a month straight. And obviously it stimulates the imagination for what's hiding in the dark."

WHAT'S NEXT: Starring on J. J. Abrams's Hulu series inspired by Stephen King's *Castle Rock*.

—LAUREN LARSON

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Hong Chau

AGE: 38

WHERE YOU'VE SEEN HER BEFORE: In David Simon's *Treme*; giving a hard sell for the "Pussy-Eater Special" (\$14.95) at Chick Planet Massage in the P. T. Anderson stoner mystery *Inherent Vice*.

BREAKOUT ROLE:

As Matt Damon's cohort in Alexander Payne's *Downsizing*, in which folks get shrunk to save money and the environment. (But really: themselves.)

HER FEELINGS ON TAKING THE ROLE:

"If someone's gonna fuck it up, let it be me."

IS MATT DAMON AS HANDSOME IN PERSON AS HE IS ON-SCREEN?

"He looked like a White Walker from *Game of Thrones*—they put pasty makeup on him to make him look a little doughier, and his eyes are so blue."

WHAT DOES DAMON THINK OF CHAU?

"She's going to be a star."

AND WHAT DOES ALEXANDER PAYNE THINK?

"She already is—people just don't know it yet." —KEVIN NGUYEN

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Lakeith Stanfield

AGE: 26

BREAKOUT ROLES: As a stoner who dispenses the show's sharpest insights on Donald Glover's FX series *Atlanta*; as a body-snatched guy in *Get Out*; as a wrongly convicted man in *Crown Heights*; as Chandler in the Jay-Z video for "Moonlight."

HOW'D THAT LAST ONE HAPPEN? When Hov asks you to be in a *Friends* remake with Issa Rae, Tiffany Haddish, and Jerrod Carmichael, you say yes.
BUT...CHANDLER? "I was unfamiliar with *Friends* prior to this. But once I started

watching, I was like, 'Oh. They're going to make me Chandler because he's the weirdo.'"

ARE ANY OTHER FAMOUS PEOPLE BLOWING UP STANFIELD'S PHONE? Spike Jonze, who surprise-FaceTimed Stanfield to ask if he'd dance in a two-person

experimental art piece called *Changers: A Dance Story* after seeing—what else!—a viral clip of Stanfield getting down with himself onstage at the Golden Globes.
HOW 'ATLANTA' CREATOR DONALD GLOVER DESCRIBES HIM: "Keith isn't afraid to embarrass

people. He's the wild card we need to remind us that it's all chaos."

WHAT'S NEXT: The absurdist comedy *Sorry to Bother You*, in which he plays a telemarketer whose career takes off when he figures out how to use his "white voice" to pitch strangers.—CHRIS GAYOMALI

The *Dunkirk* Guys

JACK LOWDEN
& BARRY
KEOGHAN

AGES: 27 and 25

BREAKOUT ROLES: As an RAF pilot (Lowden) and a be-cardiganed volunteer mariner (Keoghan) in Christopher Nolan's World War II epic *Dunkirk*.

ABOUT THAT CARDIGAN... It was very hot on the boat, necessitating what Keoghan describes as "long chats about the sweater" with Nolan.

WHAT WOULD KEOGHAN WEAR TO WAR? "I wouldn't wear anything. I'd paint myself green."

WOULD LOWDEN GO TO WAR NAKED, TOO?

"Yeah, just to make Barry feel less awkward."

WHY DID NOLAN CAST TWO GUYS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF OPPOSITE ONE OF THE BIGGEST POP STARS IN THE WORLD?

"Barry's seeming naïveté was perfect, and Jack's self-assured charisma made him give as good as he got."

WHAT'S NEXT: Lowden will appear opposite The Rock in the WWE comedy *Fighting with My Family* and (presumably) in pantaloons with Margot Robbie in *Mary Queen of Scots*. You can see Keoghan ruining Colin Farrell's and Nicole Kidman's lives in *The Killing of a Sacred Deer*, or in the boxing ring.

WAIT, WHAT? "I've given up acting full-time," Keoghan says by way of (sorta) explanation.

"I'm fighting now. Look at my hand!" —JAY WILLIS

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the Breakouts

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TRAPPED

BUILDINGS aren't supposed to burn the way London's **GRENFELL TOWER** did. But to the residents stuck inside, and to the firefighters who rushed to save them, this was a different kind of fire, a blaze that burned at 1,800 degrees, a devastating inferno that killed dozens and shocked an entire nation. This is the untold story of what it felt like to fight that fire and to flee it—a story of a thousand impossible decisions and the people who dared that night to make them

1

INCIPIENT STAGE

OLUWASEUN TALABI didn't want to live in the tower anymore. The 30-year-old, a watchful, muscular man who worked in construction, said as much to his family on the night of June 13, 2017. Talabi lived with his partner, Rosemary, and their 4-year-old daughter in a two-bedroom apartment on the 14th floor of a London high-rise called Grenfell Tower. Their home was on the southwest corner of the tower, which meant

its windows provided two very different city panoramas. From the living room, you looked west to the poorer fringes of the British capital. The bedrooms faced ritzy London territory to the south—roads lined with mansion homes that seemed continuously under renovation, their cellars scooped deeper and deeper into the city to make room for new amenities. Grenfell Tower itself had lately been refurbished, its bolted-on satellite dishes stripped from the outside walls and replaced by neat squares of insulating paneling, so that the building's 1970s concrete core—for 50 years plainly and brownly exposed—was concealed behind the bluish silver of new cladding. Theirs wasn't an objectionable home. But Talabi couldn't be comfortable here.

He did not regard himself a worrier, more an evaluator. Like a lot of Grenfell's occupants, he and his family were public-housing tenants, their homes provided by the neighborhood municipal authority, Kensington and Chelsea Council. Around 350 people lived in the tower, 129 one- and two-bedroom apartments stacked 24 stories high. At Grenfell's base was a lobby, a nursery, a boxing gym. From the 14th floor, it seemed to Talabi that plenty could go wrong if there were this many obstacles between his family and the ground. He had told his family more than once: "I didn't like this place from the first day I got in here. And I won't like it till the last day."

It was the evening of the last day. The couple ate, watched TV, got ready for bed. Talabi stepped out for a final cigarette. Passing the elevators on the 14th floor, he ducked into the escape stairwell—a narrow concrete space that bore right down the middle of the building. Talabi smoked, read up on sports news on his phone, and then went back inside and went to sleep.



"FIRE, FIRE." At a London station such as the one in North Kensington, firefighters start muttering the word to each other as soon as it appears on their watch-room teleprinter, a way of telling themselves: Get in the trucks. Get your equipment in order. Get your *head* in order. Each of London's 103 fire stations safeguards its own piece of the capital, employing four rotating crews of about a dozen men and women that are known as Watches. London has a Red, a Green, a White, and a Blue Watch, deployed on a coordinated rotation. A first phone call to the emergency services came through from Grenfell Tower at 12:54 A.M. A faulty fridge had set fire to a resident's kitchen on the fourth floor. Red Watch was dispatched from North Ken station, and by 12:56 A.M. its two fire trucks were wailing in the high-rise's direction.

In the weeks after June 14, it was difficult for the public to grasp, exactly, what the individual firefighters on the Red Watch went through that night at Grenfell Tower. Almost without exception, rank-and-file firefighters were banned from talking to the media until the investigations into the fire have been completed. I was able to interview several serving and former firefighters (those who had retired could speak more freely than the others, who would require anonymity). They told me about the first trucks arriving at Grenfell Tower. Coils of hosing were off-loaded, hydrants tapped for water. Those Reds assigned to wear breathing apparatuses hauled heavy oxygen tanks onto their backs and readied their masks. At this point, still, everything would have seemed routine enough. Accidental fires sparked in high-rises as often as they sparked anywhere else; high-rises built or maintained with a proper respect for and dread of fire are able to contain them. A recently retired firefighter named Ian Frost, who'd served a decade as second-in-command of North Ken's Red Watch, told me he'd been at several fires in the district's high-rises. "You knew that if you could get in quickly, isolate that fire, isolate that floor, it was all quite easy to control," he said.

Residents from the fourth floor were coming down the tower's central stairwell as the Reds went up. In the afflicted apartment, two men wearing breathing apparatuses trained their hoses on the flames, dousing whatever burned. People on the floors directly above had awoken by now and were starting to vacate the tower as well.

David Badillo, one of the Reds on duty that night, had served in North Kensington for 17 years, and before he became a firefighter he had been a lifeguard at a nearby swimming pool. "He still knew people who lived inside the tower," Tim Hoy, a retired officer of the Reds and Badillo's former boss, told me. (When I asked Badillo for an interview, he referred me to the London Fire Brigade, which declined my request. Badillo wasn't averse to his story being told, he indicated, as long as it would help draw attention to those who'd suffered on the night of June 14 and who still needed support; however, he did not feel he could contribute to my reporting without risking his job.) In firefighter terms, Badillo was "busy," which, as Hoy explained, meant that he combined a degree of cheek with an eagerness to be in first on anything dangerous. The 44-year-old—shaven-headed, short, a marathon runner and former boxer who took care to be fit—was described to me by a colleague as "little in stature and big in heart." Others called Badillo loyal, soft-spoken, a "good hand," by which they meant a good firefighter and, on quieter nights in North Ken, the station's superstar cook. It made sense to people



that he transitioned from lifeguarding to firefighting because he was a doer, a helper—a hurl-himself-in-er.

Badillo later talked about his night inside the building to colleagues and friends such as Hoy and Frost. When he went in, he was not wearing a breathing apparatus but was instead carrying in extra equipment for firefighters who were. In the lobby, Badillo was stopped by a young woman. She was a resident of the tower, she explained, and her 12-year-old sister was up on the 20th floor. The young woman was in some distress at the thought of her sister being alone. Their mother was working a night shift. Their father was out of the apartment visiting a friend. The woman asked Badillo if she could rush up with him, quickly, to fetch her sister.

Badillo thought about it and said no. But stay here, he told her, and I'll go and get your sister. He found out a name—Jessica—and borrowed the keys to the apartment. Then he climbed into the elevator, pressing for the 20th floor.

"You've got to think on your feet," a serving colleague of Badillo's said. "Dave went into that lift without BA [breathing apparatus]. I've said to him I love him for it. For trying to help."

Residents of Grenfell Tower wave for help as the fire spreads along the exterior of the building.

Badillo traveled up the tower. Residents leaving the building had spoken of seeing fire on the fifth floor, even on the sixth floor. To an experienced city firefighter, this would not have made sense. However violent, a fire in a high-rise like this ought to have been overmatched by the concrete walls of the apartment in which it burned. A fourth-floor fire should remain a fourth-floor fire. Badillo later told people that his elevator had gotten to the 14th or 15th floor when it stopped and the doors juddered open. Immediately a black, blinding, silent smoke rushed in around him.

2 GROWTH STAGE

FIRE FROM THE FOURTH FLOOR had reached an outside wall of the tower and then caught—unthinkably—the sheer sides of the exterior. Fat amber flames licked up

Grenfell's northeastern elevation so quickly, so determinedly, that for a time firefighters stationed indoors and outdoors would have been responding to wildly different degrees of crisis. What would have seemed inside to be a manageable appliance fire was catastrophizing, outside, into the gravest threat to residential Londoners in 75 years: since the city's bombing at war. One of the first police officers to arrive at the scene would later say that "the building was melting." At least 320 people were inside. Most, like Oluwaseun Talabi, were asleep.

He awoke at 1:30 A.M., disturbed by shouts from below. Disoriented, Talabi supposed that what he was hearing was the sound of a party. The night before, he'd been woken at a similar hour by a gathering on a floor below: Spanish-language, it'd sounded like, but in Grenfell Tower it could as easily have been Arabic, English, Italian, Portuguese, Persian, Pashto. It was summer and gatherings ran late. Mid-June was Ramadan, and observing residents would have hosted family and friends to break fasts. Talabi looked for the disturbance from his bedroom window and saw nothing. His 4-year-old daughter had climbed into her parents' bed while they slept, and Talabi lay back beside her and tried to fall back asleep.



There was no audible communal fire alarm in Grenfell Tower. It also had no sprinklers. (The law in England requiring sprinklers in buildings taller than 100 feet applies only to new buildings.) A bright and teacherly newsletter, distributed around the tower in 2014, described emergency policy in the event of a fire. “Our longstanding ‘stay put’ policy stays in force,” the newsletter advised. “This is because Grenfell was designed according to rigorous fire safety standards.” As advice, “stay put” does make some logical sense, at least in a concrete high-rise. The thinking (fire brigade-endorsed) is that by remaining where they are for as long as a fire is out of sight, residents won’t flee from an area of relative safety into one of threat. Of course, this thinking means nothing if fire is able to spread up the side of a building, away from its concrete core.

Talabi was roused a second time, and now he could make out what was being shouted from the base of the tower: “Fire, fire!” He shook Rosemary awake and snatched on clothes while she put on a robe. He would not be staying put. Instead, he picked up his daughter, clasped hands with Rosemary, and ran them all to the front door. They opened it and were met by a wall of dense, rank smoke. Talabi pulled everyone back inside. Once they’d gummed wet towels around the edges of the front door, Talabi gathered all the bedsheets he could. The smoke he’d inhaled tasted of chemicals, like nothing he’d ever had in his lungs before. He didn’t think they’d last more than a few gasps of it. He looked again out his bedroom window. The apartment was 14 stories up. He’d collected together 14 bedsheets.

Talabi ran to the kitchen to try to get eyes on the fire. Bands of flame were torquing around Grenfell Tower like a wrung cloth. Talabi could see inexplicable and contradictory things. Smoke from below. Fire from above. Fire falling from above, making a *tsk-tsk-tsk* sound as great glowing slices of something peeled away from Grenfell’s stricken upper floors and dropped past his kitchen

window. The couple went back inside their bedroom, where they paced, and called the emergency services, and tried to think. By now some neighbors had joined them in the apartment, driven out of their own homes by the smoke. Two were brothers, men in their 20s from Syria. One of them noticed that Talabi had been tying together bedsheets and he asked Talabi why. Talabi replied: “Bro...”

The fire neared their corner of the building. Talabi fastened the end of his knotted bedsheets inside the bedroom, fed the remainder out the open window, and then climbed out after it. As he hung on the outside of Grenfell Tower, his fingers curled around the frame of his bedroom window, he wasn’t willing, yet, to test the strength of the sheets. Instead Talabi told Rosemary to pass out their daughter. But their daughter, crying and struggling, would not let herself be passed. She pushed herself away from the window frame, and Talabi in this moment saw that his plan as it was—to descend holding the bedsheets in one hand, his daughter in the other—was not going to work. As his belief in the plan failed, so did his strength. He realized he could not pull himself back inside. He kicked for a foothold beneath him, but the building’s paneling was too slippery and his feet wouldn’t stick. He stopped kicking. He clung to the window frame.



TALABI PRAYED THAT NIGHT. On the 22nd floor, a mother of three offered up prayers of her own in Arabic. A woman who lived on the 20th sent a message to a friend: “Pray for me and my mum.” On the 17th, a family recited *du’as* from the Koran. There were people of all religions in the tower, people who did every sort of job, large numbers of children and the elderly. There were teachers in there, and pupils, some due in classrooms the next morning at a school just north of the tower. Grenfell had a hairdresser, a caterer, a cleaner, a security guard. A woman on the 16th floor made art in her retirement, and a

1. A firefighter watches from a nearby building as the blaze engulfs Grenfell Tower.
2. The ruins took weeks to search. “You could tell that some of the deceased were still in those homes because of the patterns under the rubble,” a member of the recovery team said.
3. A man holds up a picture of a missing resident during a protest, two days after the fire.
4. Grenfell Tower in 2014, before it was clad in its problematic paneling.
5. Protesters are confronted by police outside Kensington Town Hall.

man on the 21st made websites. Pets: a dog named for a reggae musician on the 23rd, another for a racing driver on the 19th. There was an architecture-school graduate who rented right at the top; a young lecturer in criminology who was bunking with his aunt. The brothers who lived on Talabi’s floor were recent refugees from the Syrian war. A man on the 23rd had moved to London, decades ago, to escape conflict in Afghanistan. A Sudanese man was visiting his mother that night. His body was later found on the ground near the tower. He’d jumped. The man from Afghanistan also jumped, and was found on the ground. The artist on the 16th floor was identified by her dental records, the caterer by his DNA. People died in the stairwells; people died near the elevators; people died in their homes. They spoke on cell phones to the emergency services and to family and friends, in any number of languages, until lines disconnected or they just fell silent. Relatives of the mother of three on the 22nd floor would later say her final words to them were about forgiveness. “You seemed to know,” they said.

The girl on the 20th floor—the 12-year-old sister of the anxious woman in the lobby—was never found by David Badillo. When the elevator that Badillo was riding opened its doors halfway up the tower, he had to inch his way, blind, to the escape stairwell. He later told colleagues and friends how he ran down the stairs to the ground floor, where he retrieved a breathing apparatus and



found another firefighter who was willing to accompany him back inside—back up. They climbed 20 flights, 40 punishing stairway turns, to where the girl's apartment was. By now, on these upper stories, the smoke was so concentrated that responders had to put their masks right up against the doors to read the apartment numbers. When Badillo and his partner found the correct door, it was ajar, as if the young girl—Jessica—had already fled. Nevertheless, the two firefighters searched inside, feeling their way along the walls, shouting, shouting, until they were convinced that nobody was inside, and until the air tank on Badillo's partner's back began to let out a high-pitched whistle. "At a certain point, your oxygen tank gives you that audible warning—to get out," Ian Frost explained. The colleague of Badillo's told me: "There comes a point where the firefighter's got to think: 'I have to. Or I'm going to die as well.' I can't imagine having to make that call. Dave's having to leave a place where he's been told there might be a 12-year-old girl—to save himself. He told me: 'I was gone. I had nothing left to offer.' I told him: 'You couldn't have done any more. Apart from die.'"

Badillo and his partner abandoned the 20th-floor apartment and, before their air ran out, they regained the stairwell. They were heat-stressed to the verge of collapse when they made it down to the ground.

Firefighters that night led, carried, and dragged residents away from the fire. And they left residents behind to it. They made hundreds of no-win decisions on June 14, about whether to help those in peril in the stairwell or whether to push on past and try to make it to those farther up. The handing over of a firefighter's breathing equipment to

civilians (always a dangerous temptation) is forbidden by the London Fire Brigade—but it happened, I was told, and it was later forgiven, part of a brigade-wide amnesty on those everyday procedures ignored by firefighters in this frenzied, dirty, impossible evacuation.

Outside, firefighters had to aim water hoses at one of their own trucks, which had been ignited by all the falling cladding. For many of the evacuating residents, the most terrifying parts of their escape took place once they were outside, running through the area directly in front of the building, which had become a no-man's-land of tumbling metal. Firefighters began making shuttle runs back and forth, ferrying out evacuees under riot shields.

At 2 A.M., 3 A.M., 4 A.M., hours after the first firefighters had arrived, residents were still trapped. Still waving, still shouting: "Fucking *help* me." By 5 A.M., hardly any people were visible in Grenfell's windows. Firefighters on the ground held their heads, and panted, and were dismally honest with one another: "We're not going to get everybody out." When, earlier in the night, they saw a man on the 14th floor, hanging from a windowsill, knotted bedsheets trailing beneath him, they screamed at him to get back inside.

3 FLASHOVER

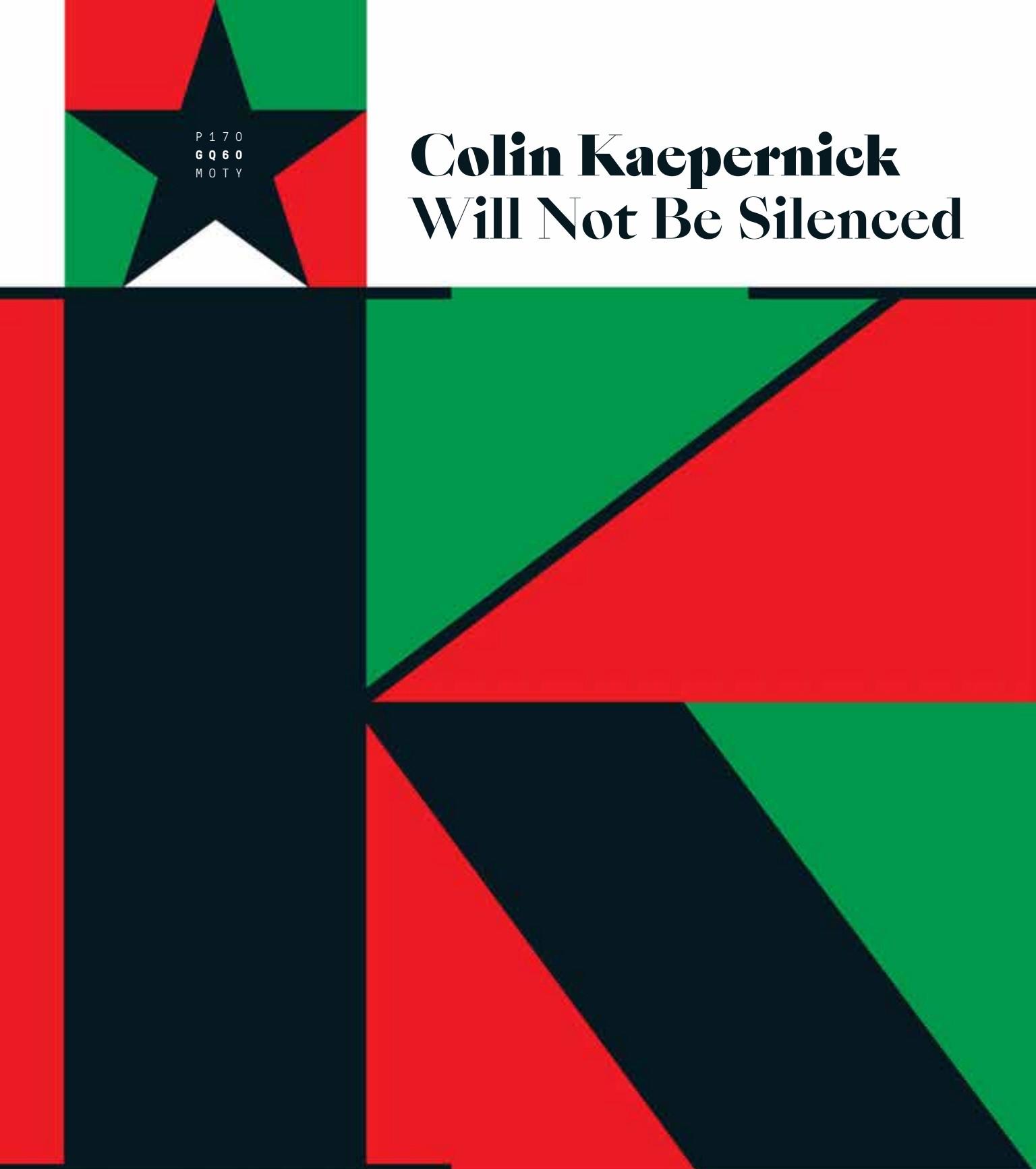
OLUWASEUN TALABI WOULD have said to anyone who wasn't there, who wasn't *in* there, just close your eyes. Try to imagine it. No escape.

Firefighters that night led, carried, and dragged residents from the fire. And they left residents behind to it. They made hundreds of no-win decisions.

WHEN A VETERAN FIREFIGHTER in London read on his station's teleprinter that more than 20 of the city's 142 fire engines had just been sent to Grenfell Tower, his experience told him this must be terrorism: a bomb. When a little later he learned that 20 more engines had been dispatched, his experience came up blank. Plane crash? "I couldn't work it out," the veteran said. "This was a concrete tower. Not flammable." Responders at Grenfell spoke of a disorienting feeling—"like a dream"—as they watched the fire gust up and around the tower until it was engulfed.

Two inquiries (one political, one criminal) have been launched to determine causes and contributing factors; they will continue into next year. A BBC investigation conducted shortly after the fire suggested that the aluminum-composite cladding used at Grenfell was of an inferior—and cheaper—variety and was not officially classified as fire-retardant. A 75-page preliminary report compiled by a group called Architects for Social Housing, or ASH, focused on the fact that Grenfell had been *doubly* clad during its refurbishment. First with squares of dense foam insulation, to keep the building warm. Second with squares of aluminum-composite rain-screen paneling, to keep it dry. The ASH report, which drew on the informed speculation of dozens of experts, proposed the likelihood of cavities between the double layer of cladding. If oxygen lurked in these cavities, it would have been there that the fire at Grenfell spread most aggressively. The outer aluminum rain screen, slower to burn than insulation, might even have kept water from adequately dousing the worst of the fire. The head of the London Fire Brigade was asked, afterward, what additional tools might have aided her crews on the night, and she answered: "A miracle."

Seen from the ground, Britain can appear to be a country under great strain, its people divided since a close vote last year to abandon membership in the European Union, its public services teetering after a decade of drastic spending (*continued on page 180*)



P 170
G Q 60
MOTY

Colin Kaepernick Will Not Be Silenced

Citizen

MARTIN SCHOELLER

HE'S BEEN vilified by millions and locked out of the NFL—all because he took a knee to protest police brutality. But COLIN KAEPERNICK'S determined stand puts him in rare company in sports history: Muhammad Ali, Jackie Robinson—athletes who risked everything to make a difference







P 1 7 3
G Q 6 0
M O T Y

I
KNOW
MY
RIGHTS



I

IN 2013, Colin Kaepernick was on the cover of this magazine because he was one of the best football players in the world. In 2017, Colin

Kaepernick is on GQ's cover once again—but this time it is because he *isn't* playing football. And it's not because he's hurt, or because he's broken any rules, or because he's not good enough. Approximately 90 men are currently employed as quarterbacks in the NFL, as either starters or reserves, and Colin Kaepernick is better—indisputably, undeniably, flat-out better—than at least 70 of them. He is still, to this day, one of the most gifted quarterbacks on earth. And yet he has been locked out of the game he loves—blackballed—because of one simple gesture: He knelt during the playing of our national anthem. And he did it for a clear reason, one that has been lost in the yearlong storm that followed. He did it to protest systemic oppression and, more specifically, as he said repeatedly at the time, police brutality toward black people.

When we began discussing this GQ cover with Colin earlier this fall, he told us the reason he wanted to participate is that he wants to reclaim the narrative of his protest, which has been hijacked by a president eager to make this moment about himself. But Colin also made it clear to us that he intended to remain silent. As his public identity has begun to shift from football star to embattled activist, he has grown wise to the power of his silence. It has helped his story go around the world. It has even provoked the ire and ill temper of Donald Trump. Why talk now, when your detractors will only twist your words and use them against you? Why speak now, when silence has done so much?

At the same time, Colin is all too aware that silence creates a vacuum, and that if it doesn't get filled somehow, someone else will fill it for him. In our many conversations with Colin about this project, we discussed the history of athletes and civil rights, and the indelible moments it called to mind, and we decided that we'd use photography—the power of imagery and iconography—to do the talking.

By the end of the 1960s, Muhammad Ali's stand against the Vietnam War—he'd marched in Harlem with the Nation of Islam after he was drafted and refused to serve—resulted in him being locked out of his sport for three years, at the peak of his talent, much as Colin is now. He continued to train throughout that period, waiting for his chance to return to boxing. He was known for jogging in the streets, and kids would chase him—the People's Champ, boosted in his darkest days by the joy of his truest fans. That's why we decided to photograph Colin in public, in Harlem, among the men, women, and children he is fighting for. To connect him to a crusade that stretches back decades. And because Colin has spent a year as a man without a team, we worked with him to assemble a new one: ten of his closest confidants—artists, activists, academics, and one legend of the civil rights movement—who shared with GQ what Colin's protest means to them, and what we all should do next.—THE EDITORS OF GQ

Ava DuVernay

Filmmaker, 'Selma,' '13th,' and 2018's 'A Wrinkle in Time'

- I see what he's done as art. I believe that art is seeing the world that doesn't exist. A lot of people excel at creativity—making TV, movies, painting, writing books—but you can be an artist in your own life. Civil rights activists are artists. Athletes are artists. People who imagine something that is not there. I think some folks see his protests, his resistance, as not his work. Not intentional. Not strategic. Not as progressive action. As if this was just a moment that he got caught up in. This was *work*. This is work that he's doing.

The last time I saw him was the night after Trump called him out at the Alabama rally. It was a really dynamic weekend. I had dinner with him and Nessa [Kaepernick's partner]. To be able to sit with that brother on this particular day—on the day between two historic cultural moments that swirled around him—was shape-shifting for me. Being able to observe that and witness his stillness and wisdom—I'm just really honored to know him. He's sitting there and I'm sitting there and I'm like, "Look at this brother—he's doing better than any of us would've done." A lot better. With a lot more elegance.

Carmen Perez

Activist, executive director of The Gathering for Justice, which addresses mass incarceration and child incarceration

- What I always tell people is, I could teach you about the law, I could teach you about the criminal-justice system—but I can't teach you how to have heart. We don't need a movement full of experts. We need people who care deeply to stand up and offer what they have, because there's a role for everyone. You make music? Make some for the movement. You cook? Organizers need to be fed. You teach self-defense or yoga? Help people heal. You're an athlete? Use your platform to raise awareness. It's not about everyone trying to become the next Martin Luther King Jr., because he had clergymen and journalists and artists like Harry Belafonte. It's about how we connect to our neighbor and offer our skill set. As Mr. Belafonte has said: Don't pay me back—pay it back to the cause.

I want people to understand that even if incarceration doesn't personally impact you, or police brutality doesn't personally impact you, you can still be involved. How can we show these mothers who are suffering that we love them and we care about them? I often ask: Can we see our liberation bound to one another's? I'm a proud Mexican-American and Chicana who deeply believes that black lives matter and that once black people are free, then my people will be free.

**ABOUT
THIS
SHOOT**

I've produced *GQ* photo shoots for two decades, and this is one I'll never forget. We shot on the streets of Harlem—an allusion to photographs of Muhammad Ali taken at a similar moment in his career, when he'd been blocked from boxing because of his Vietnam War protest. Colin wore clothes designed by people of color. The leather blazer on our table of contents was inspired by Richard Roundtree in *Shaft*, and the names on this tee memorialize black lives taken by police. Every image was powerful, but my favorite is the shot of Colin with people from charities he supports. They came in droves. He was so gentle. He treated everyone with respect. And they were in awe of him.

—VICTORIA GRAHAM,
GQ BOOKINGS DIRECTOR

"
PREVIOUS PAGES
tank top \$40
(for three)
Calvin Klein
Underwear

his own dashiki
from Ghana

pants \$315
Lynch & Mason

►
THIS PAGE
jacket \$1,895
Musika Frère
his custom t-shirt by
Kerby Jean-Raymond
of **Pyer Moss**

EVEN MORE NAMES
CHRISTOPHER WADE
ALTERIA WOODS
GREGORY GUNN
KEITH LAMONT SCOTT
FREDDIE GREY
DESMOND PHILLIPS
GYNNYA MCMILLEN
ALTON STERLING
CHARLEENA LYLES
KISHA MICHAEL
ALFRED OLANGO
GIOVONN JOSEPH-MCDADE
TERENCE CRUTCHER
NATASHA MCKENNA
PHILANDO CASTILE
SANDRA BLAND
KENNY WATKINS
SAMUEL DUBOSE
MYA HALL
JORDAN EDWARD





“

I always tell Colin: ‘You are an American hero. You may not feel like a hero right now, but one day, people will realize the sacrifices that you made for so many others.’ There might even be a day when we’ll be walking down Colin Kaepernick Boulevard. I truly believe that in my heart.” —Linda Sarsour

J. Cole

Rapper

• Colin and I met years ago. I am—I was—a big 49ers fan. I met him during his breakout season. I actually went to the first game he really played in, against the Jets. I just happened to be at that game. It hit another level for me the second I learned he was taking a knee. And it wasn’t just that—it was when I saw the shit he was saying in the interviews when they pressed him about it. His answers were just so clear and potent. Like, right on point. And he wasn’t backing down. And he wasn’t afraid. He was just being honest. And it didn’t seem like he was looking for attention. It caught me off guard because,

you know, nothing personally against him, I just didn’t know when I met him that the person with the biggest balls in sports would be him.

You’re talking about a guy in his athletic prime, who’s lived his whole life dreaming about playing football at a level that millions of kids dream to get to. And in his first big season, he takes his team to within *five yards* of winning a Super Bowl. But then, at some point in time, he becomes conscious about what’s happening in the world. And suddenly something that he’s been doing blindly for his whole life—standing for the national anthem—now feels uncomfortable. Why? Because now it feels phony! It feels like, *Man,*

how can I stand for this thing when this country is not holding itself true to the principles it says it stands for? I feel like we’re lying. And look what happens to him. Had he not done that, this guy would be making millions of dollars right now. Period, point blank. And more important than the money, he was living his dream. He sacrificed his dream.

Tamika Mallory

National co-chair for Women’s March; activist on issues related to women’s rights, health care, anti-violence, and ethical police conduct

- My position is that people should not be watching football right now, while we’re in the middle of this, because we don’t need to add to their ratings. We need to ensure that we’re not on social media talking about the game as if Colin Kaepernick is not still up for deliberation. Now, I have some family members who have said to me that they don’t agree. But if everybody agreed about everything, our society wouldn’t be as diverse. And I think that where an opinion turns into the oppression of another human being, or a group of people, that’s where we must draw the line. Some people want to argue, “But the national anthem may not be a place for this because this is about all of us as Americans, the American dream, and American freedom.” And then I have to give them the history of the third verse that Francis Scott Key wrote, which refers directly to us as slaves, and being unable to escape the wrath of slave owners. When I bring that to them, they begin to understand.

Ameer Hasan Loggins

Writer and U.C. Berkeley academic, lecturer, onetime Bay Area hip-hop icon

- Colin is just a learned person. If you really sit and talk to him, he is a seeker of knowledge. One time I just happened to mention, “Yo, I teach class at Berkeley,” and he was like, “I’m gonna come through.” I was like, “Yeah, all right.” And he did. He did so in a way that showed me a lot about his character. He didn’t just come through like, “I’m Colin Kaepernick.” He had his little notebook, he had his pencil, he was taking notes, he was participating, he was reading the texts. He was on time to every class, making that trip from San Jose.

His protest has exposed the truth about a lot of people in the NFL, even while he hasn’t said anything. I think people underestimate the tactical brilliance involved in that. I understand why people want him to speak out. I understand that. I think they should take the time to understand why he hasn’t.

I think that Colin’s convictions provide him with comfort. A comfort that some of us are uncomfortable with, because we’re mad for him. We’re upset to see somebody who gives a damn being treated so poorly.



P 1 7 7
G Q 6 0
MOTY



◀
gray sweatpants \$295
Alexander Wang

▶
track pants \$995
sneakers \$1,195
Fear of God

It's a problem that we've decided the conversation leans on "Does Colin want to be an activist, or does he want to be an athlete?" As if the two cannot happen simultaneously. You can care about people and play sports. Athletes do it all the time. The problem is that his particular activism was toward the cause of blackness. That's what he's being ostracized for. You see players talk all the time about their nonprofit organizations, their donation to this foundation they work with. Nobody's talking about *them* not being able to juggle their football careers and being helpful to the community. It's only with him that it's questioned. The irony now is that the NFL is trying to make him voiceless because he made himself a voice for the voiceless. Which is one of the reasons I'll die on that sword to defend what he has done. Because he did it for the people.

Eric Reid

Safety for the San Francisco 49ers, Kaepernick's former teammate, and the first NFL player to join him in kneeling during the anthem

- My goal this year has been to get the narrative back on track. We started having communications with the NFL, and they said they're going to help us make progress on these issues. But the next step is to get Colin back in the NFL. Because he's the one that started this. I think we're finally getting where me and Colin envision this going. Now it's time for him to get back in the league.

These issues are real, and people know they're real. But some will do anything to distract from that, to change the narrative, and it's gotten Colin blackballed from the NFL.

The Bible talks very explicitly in Proverbs about being the voice of the voiceless and speaking up for the vulnerable. Another verse is: "Faith without works is dead." I guess selfishly I'm trying to get to heaven.

Christopher Petrella

Writer and scholar at Bates College

- In my view, the most pernicious element of white backlash against Colin's protest has been the way in which the narrative has been co-opted and re-framed so that taking a knee is now somehow synonymous with disrespecting the flag, with a lack of patriotism.



The American flag is not a neutral ideology—it represents something very, very specific to most folk. When someone comes along and tries to point out the history, for instance, of the national anthem, or the emergence of the American flag and its various iterations over time, and asks very difficult questions of "an adolescent country"—that's a James Baldwin phrase—it becomes uncomfortable. You may recall Ruth Bader Ginsburg's comments last year, when Colin started his protest. Someone who's known as a fairly liberal, left-leaning, or moderate, or whatever terms you wanna use, Supreme Court justice called his protest "dumb and disrespectful." Which is fascinating, because many folks have pointed out that politicians on the right, obviously those in the White House, have been very critical of these protests. But often it's bipartisan.

I think it was Howard Thurman, a modern civil rights activist and educator, who said, "Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive." What the world needs is for people to come alive. In a lot of ways, Colin operates through that unspoken philosophy. My hope is that Colin's protest will help mainstream white America to come alive to the deep injustices of our time and of our nation's history. That's the beginning of what the world needs.

Linda Sarsour

Activist, co-organizer of the Women's March on Washington, former executive director of the Arab American Association of New York

- An activist is anyone who cares about something and has a talent that they're willing to put toward it. Every single one of us needs to prioritize: What is it that touches your heart the most? Is it the killing of unarmed black people? Is it domestic violence against women? Is it immigration and protecting undocumented people?

I always tell Colin: "You are an American hero. You may not feel like a hero right now, but one day, people will realize the sacrifices that you made for so many others." There might even be a day when we'll be walking down Colin Kaepernick Boulevard and people will remember what Colin Kaepernick did, just like we remember Muhammad Ali. And I truly believe that in my heart.

Nessa

Nationally syndicated radio host/TV personality, American Muslim who works in communities for social justice, and Kaepernick's partner of nearly three years

- Colin has always been helping people, he has always been involved, because he has empathy. Empathy was a reason why he was adopted: His parents—two of their children had passed away from heart defects. It's why he helped so many young children with heart defects get proper care—he's been doing that for years. I'm very

fortunate that I have Colin next to me. It's everything. We love each other, we care for each other, and we have to remind each other that, hey, we're doing our part, we're trying to make a difference.

As long as you're educated and you have the facts, get into those discussions about race. Have those conversations. I don't care how intense they get. You need to let Uncle Whoever and Auntie Whoever, who might feel a certain way, who might be racist or prejudiced, know that it's not right and it's not okay. Their beliefs are never based on facts. It's always opinions or lies or misinformation, and that is where you can make a difference—by helping them get educated. Just know that it's probably going to be a fight at first, and be okay with that. You know, your Thanksgiving might not be that good this year. Your Christmas might not be the best because we just had an argument. But you know what? It's okay, it's all right—that's what families do, anyway. And why would you want a family member out there sounding ignorant? So it's fine, we're going to fight over the eggnog, and that's just what it is. We may not see eye to eye, but I did my part, sharing the truth, because that's all you can do. Be just in an unjust room.

Harry Belafonte

Artist, activist, legend

- In my 90th year of life, to see people like Colin Kaepernick having gotten the message and carrying the cause forward is the greatest reward I could ask for. Colin is a remarkable young man. The fact that he spoke out on police brutality against young black men—I thought it was absolutely admirable. I'm prepared to do anything it takes and whatever steps I can to support him if this insanity continues.

And this is not just confined to black athletes—any person with a high profile has to consider their responsibility to help keep the nation honorable and honest. After all the courageous things that have been done by so many courageous people, it's a cop-out to not speak up. Trump has betrayed our nation. Taking a shot at him is worthy of all of us. Not being "political" is not a solution. Any young person who takes that position would have to ask Muhammad Ali and Jackie Robinson and so many of us if we had anything at stake. I know how someone who is young can get the feeling that this is the worst things have been. I see how someone could think that. But it's going to be okay. Even in the Trump era, America is going to be okay.

Interviews conducted by Ashley Fetter, Christopher Gayomali, Mark Anthony Green, Lauren Larson, Ira Madison III, Kevin Nguyen, Luisa Rollenhagen, Bijan Stephen, and Jay Willis.



KAEPERNICK

jacket (customized
back) \$1,495
track pants \$995
Fear of God

where to buy it? go to
the fashion directories
on gq.com



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 169

cuts by the incumbent government. When we look up, though, look out from a tower such as Grenfell, all the cranes, all the tarp-shrouded scaffolding, all the half-built new-builds that have aspirational names dreamed up by ad agencies—they suggest that despite a general national lassitude there is at least one industry enjoying a gaudy and conspicuous boom.

In London, now, 150-year-old pubs might close overnight because developers have cleverer notions about the use of their real estate. The roads with all the mansions in places like Kensington and Chelsea are some of the least peaceful, so often are builders brought in for improvement works. The city has been seized by a glib, unabashed, and apparently unstoppable will to build. Government-spending cuts might actually have stimulated this construction boom, in that municipal planning offices, ever poorer, ever more marginalized, are less able to scrutinize or say no to the next gratuitous project, and the next, and the next.

One resident from the 15th floor couldn't shake a feeling he'd left something important behind. "My soul is there in that building," he later told people.

It would emerge later that well over 100 tower blocks and buildings around Britain had been clad in materials that, like those used at Grenfell, failed basic fire-safety tests. There is now an effort to peel the flammable skin from these buildings, but it has not been quick work. Wherever such de-cladding gets under way, there usually remains a population of residents still living inside—closing their eyes, just imagining it.

• • •

4. Fully developed stage

OLUWASEUN TALABI, back inside his apartment. "So this is how..." He looked at his partner and he looked at his daughter and he thought: "Wow." He no longer believed they would get out.

• • •

A STUDENT ON the eighth floor got out—along with an aunt he lived with, and all of the neighbors from his floor—because he was awake and able to rouse them when the fire started. ("PlayStation saved your life," he would later say.) A man on the 16th was

telephoned by a neighbor and told: "Get out." He wrapped a towel around his face and ran. More than 600 emergency calls were recorded from inside Grenfell Tower on June 14, and in those calls made before 2:47 A.M., many residents were told to remain in their apartments. After that time, according to a subsequent BBC investigation, "stay put" was abandoned and the advice to residents became to flee, however possible. A father of two told his wife and daughters before they began their descent: "There is no turning back." After leading his own wife and daughter to safety, a resident from the 15th floor couldn't shake a feeling he'd left something important behind. "My soul is there in that building," he later told people. "I don't think my soul is with me here—it's there."

• • •

DAVID BADILLO'S SISTER, Jane, in the morning: "Are you okay?"

She sent the message to her brother by text, having just learned about the fire on the news. It was 7 A.M. Badillo was still at Grenfell, which would continue to burn, fitfully, into the afternoon and evening of June 14. The first-responding Reds had been there for six hours. They were about to be sent home. Badillo replied: "Bit numb."

"Love you."

"Love you."

A few minutes later, Badillo messaged his sister again, to ask what they were saying on the news. How many people? Jane said five was the confirmed number so far. Badillo wrote: "It's much more than that."

Jane Badillo shared the above messages with me, and agreed to a limited interview, on the condition that I made it clear it was her decision to contribute to my reporting, and not her brother's. She had been concerned about the psychological impact of the disaster on her brother and his colleagues. She suspected they were bottling up quite a lot. Badillo was, and one night, while the siblings were talking, it all came pouring out—what had happened to him immediately after the fire. When Badillo and the other first-responding Reds had been relieved, they were sent for a cup of tea, sent to be debriefed, sent home. Badillo had ridden his bike in before his shift, he told Jane, and now he rode it home, the smoldering tower still in view for some of the route. When he got back to his wife and his baby daughter, Badillo tried to sleep, but he couldn't. He told his sister he ended up reading about Grenfell on his phone, and while scrolling through his Facebook feed he saw messages from a pair of old friends, brothers named Carlos and Manfred Ruiz, whom he'd been close to ever since the trio worked together as lifeguards at the swimming pool by the tower. The Ruiz brothers were searching for their 12-year-old niece, who hadn't been seen since the start of the fire. Badillo talked to them on the telephone, and they said the girl had lived on the 20th floor. Her name was Jessica.

Something went tight inside Badillo's stomach then and stayed that way for weeks.

He had up till then been reckoning with a dull, free-floating guilt about his promise to the woman in the lobby—guilt that he'd let down strangers. This phone call was the start of a different feeling, that he'd let

down something closer to family. By the time Badillo told his sister about it, "he was in bits," Jane recalled. "Couldn't let go, you know. I said, 'There's nothing more you could have done.'" The girl's remains were later identified on the 23rd floor. Many victims of the fire, especially those on the uppermost stories, had climbed to try to escape it. Jane recalled how Badillo went over and over decisions he'd made in the tower. "Should he have gone up [on his first trip in the elevator] and not come down? Because Jessica could have been in the stairwell, one or two floors above, and he could have got to her."

• • •

AS CLOSE AS A POLICE CORDON permitted, a perimeter ring of tributes grew up around the tower. Pinned to garden fences, piled against church walls, stuck to steel barricades, there were photos and messages. Posters of the missing were mounted with whatever was at hand, including packing tape, so that many pictures of presumed victims were bordered with the same word printed over and over again: FRAGILE. The girl who lived on the 20th floor—her full name was Jessica Urbano Ramirez—was among those victims whose identification would take many weeks. Right after the fire, and in the absence of knowing for sure, posters of her were distributed so urgently around the neighborhood that Jessica's face became a precise and wrenching symbol of exactly what the night had cost.

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BY LATE OCTOBER, the official number of Grenfell's dead was 68, though that number was still rising by one or two names every fortnight and could ultimately rise as high as 100. The last visible human remains were removed from the tower in early July, the work after that continuing with fingertips, with sieves, with archaeologists, with a hired American official who'd done comparably dire work in the aftermath of 9/11. The Grenfell fire, at its peak, burned at 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit. What was left to recovery workers was tons and tons of ash.

I spoke to someone who'd worked on the recovery in the tower this summer. I asked what it was like. He took a breath. "[The apartments had] no front doors, no windows, there was nothing in them, all the plaster was down, even the stud walls had gone. You might make out a mattress, only because of the springs. Some of the porcelain, like a toilet seat, survived. There was nothing else, only the concrete walls." This person paused before continuing. "You could tell that some of the deceased were still in those homes because of the patterns under the rubble. Flat, flat, flat and then..." He had been gesturing with his hand, drawing a level line. Now he described a curve. "Like a hump. Under the dust."

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ON JUNE 16, after dark, there was a vigil beside the tower. It was peaceful. People held candles and stood in close, tactile circles around the bereaved. David Badillo made his way there, invited by his old friends the Ruiz brothers. He would be meeting Jessica's wider family for the first time. Badillo later told those he was closest to that he made this

journey back to Grenfell on trembling legs. He had no idea how the girl's family would react to him. As a firefighter explained it to me: "In your heart of hearts, you know you tried your best. You know all the firefighters tried their best. But you still had to leave people in that building. You're a firefighter who *left*. You got out. And you don't know how you're gonna be thought of." At the vigil, Jessica's family held Badillo tight and barely let go. He wept, and told them he was sorry.

It was the start of an intimate relationship between the shell-shocked firefighter and the grieving family. A relationship that found its expression on social media ("Nothing but love," Badillo wrote on Facebook on the day of the vigil). A relationship that revealed itself, briefly, on national TV, when broadcasters filmed Badillo and the family consoling each other. A relationship that in the main proceeded just as grief does, by hard-won degrees, and out of public view.

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5. Burnout

A MOMENT OF SILENCE (broadcast live); a charity single by pop stars; incautious pronouncements in the op-eds; incautious scapegoat-hunting in the tabloids: The country went through its clumsy protocols after a shock. Closer to the tower, people tried to pick themselves up, put their worlds back together. Survivors discharged from the hospital went to live in hotels. Social-housing tenants had been promised new homes by Kensington and Chelsea Council, though there were fears about what and where these new homes would be. They'd been through shock, grief, anger. Now this community was, more than anything, exhausted.

On July 19, five weeks after the fire, survivors from Grenfell attended a public meeting at Kensington and Chelsea Council's headquarters. Some were invited up to microphones in the council's main chamber to speak, but the majority were put in a gallery above. A small group of survivors, exasperated by this, tried to get down to the chamber. "We fear being burned to death in our homes," councilors were told that afternoon, by a North Kensington resident. "You fear being shouted at." One of the councilors present in the chamber, Matthew Palmer, acknowledged to me that there was some fear that afternoon. He said that police had advised there was a risk of violent disturbance; and it was for this reason, Palmer insisted, he was filmed by news cameras mouthing "Don't let them in" as the descending group tried for the chamber. The council's security team locked the fire doors to keep the survivors out, an act that must have taken a special kind of zombie resolve. But eventually a kind of compromise was reached, and more speakers than planned were admitted to the chamber to speak about their experiences. Palmer was frank with me about how "absolutely harrowing" the next hours were. He was perhaps more frank than I would have expected. "Look," Palmer said, "there's a possibility I may be up on a charge of corporate manslaughter here—the entire council leadership could be up on charges of corporate manslaughter. So hearing the stories told about Grenfell at that meeting, that was harrowing, of course it was. But I felt—and the council felt—we *had* to sit through it,

even if it lasted all night. Because however harrowing it was to hear, it was preferable to being inside that tower as it burned."

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DAVID BADILLO WAS UP in the public gallery at the meeting. Jessica's family had invited him to the council building as one of their guests, and outside the main chamber Badillo circulated, talking to survivors. He must have noticed someone whose face he recognized, whose story he was familiar with—someone whose unlikely escape from the tower had been much talked about by Red Watches since June 14. Badillo went over and introduced himself to Oluwaseun Talabi. He shook his hand fiercely.

I did, too, when I first met Talabi—shook his hand fiercely and for perhaps a few seconds longer than was conventional. You feel in awe of them, these improbable survivors, and seized by a strange instinct to confess: *I don't know if I could have done the same.* When I said something like this to Talabi, he replied: "Listen. When you're about to die, you don't know *what* you're doing." We met in a hotel, where he'd been with his family since they left the hospital, having been treated for the effects of smoke inhalation. Talabi had been able to chart his internal recovery from the changes in the color of his spit, black to caramel to normal. We met several times, always in the restaurant of the hotel. The room had a number of flat-screen TVs, and as most of them were tuned to all-hour news, I got used to the fact that while Talabi and I spoke, stories about Grenfell would sometimes roll by in the background. The aftermath had become daily news. The chief of the London Fire Brigade was interviewed one day, acknowledging that she'd sought counseling after June 14. The oldest victim of the fire had been identified, an 82-year-old man, and the youngest, a pregnant evacuee's stillborn son.

Talabi talked me through how he escaped. He was last seen by neighbors and firefighters clinging to his bedroom window frame, feet scrabbling, spent. After that, Talabi said, the two Syrian brothers inside his apartment had reached out and dragged him back through the window. One of those brothers was now dead. He had not made it out. There were three other neighbors who'd taken shelter in the apartment that night, and they were dead, too.

Talabi said: "You've seen Africans, in Nigeria, the way they tie kids to their back?" This was how, with Rosemary's help, Talabi had tied their daughter to his body. The plan was to go back out the window, this time with Talabi's daughter hitched to him. "We're just about to go out the window when the fire brigade opened the door and they said—" Here Talabi paused. He'd stood up, for no clear reason except that maybe such memories were not relivable sitting down. Now he sat and rubbed his head. "I can't remember the exact word they told us. 'Run?' Or 'Go?' Or 'Escape?'"

It was their tone that convinced him, "like either you run or you get burnt." Without hesitation he and his partner held hands, and with their child on Talabi's back, they went out through the front door again. The smoke density seemed to have doubled, tripled from earlier. And Talabi had been convinced, earlier, it would kill them. They missed the door

to the stairwell and had to retrace their steps. As they felt their way, blind, Talabi would have cause to be thankful for his nighttime cigarettes, because once inside the stairwell he could find the handrail without being able to see. "We're running [down].... We're tiring.... Every breath, you know you're taking in something dangerous.... And my child behind me—" Talabi said that this was the very worst of it: the sound that his 4-year-old made as she tried to breathe. They stumbled down past the tenth, past the seventh. They were stumbling over bodies, he later realized. "I can feel myself fading.... I'm thinking, 'I'm not losing my family, for nobody or nothing'.... The third floor was where the firemen were. And from the fifth, I could see a bit of light down there.... How I describe it, it's almost like a battery on a phone, and you've got two percent left.... That's what I felt like. And when I saw that light, it gave me like an extra one percent of life."

These last seconds, these last floors down, were only hazily available to Talabi now. He knew the firefighters ran his family out the entrance under riot shields. That they sat by a tree outside and stared up at what they'd escaped. Talabi was already thinking about the neighbors he'd last seen in the apartment, weighing as he would for some time what more he could or couldn't have done, that miserable accounting that so many who survived Grenfell would go through. Talabi recalled an elderly neighbor approaching him with water. He said, "You're lucky. You should be thanking your God." The man was interrupted, then, by a wail of animal grief from close by. Another family, Talabi later worked out, learning the worst. "And the man goes to me: 'This is why I say you're lucky.'"

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OUTSIDE HIS HOTEL, having recounted some of this, Talabi stood alone for a silent, intent cigarette. It was early evening—two months exactly since the night of the fire. I left him and walked north, to Grenfell, where about a hundred people from the community had gathered to commemorate the dead and to mark a slight but not insignificant waypoint in their own recovery: two months weathered. Among the crowd, I saw David Badillo, carrying his young daughter. He sought out his old friend Carlos Ruiz—Jessica's uncle—and the two men squeezed each other's necks in greeting. At seven o'clock, the group set off together on a planned march. They were silent as they walked through what is by any measure a very loud and traffic-choked part of London. The city, in answer to them, fell quiet. Conversations stopped. Strides were checked and buses halted mid-road. Behind chain-link fences, kids picked up soccer balls and stood panting. The march followed a route away from the burned tower, then circled around. Back at Grenfell, Badillo and his daughter got separated from the group, and I watched as the firefighter hesitated, standing aside to let marchers flow by, as though wondering where his place was among them. In the end he walked on, past the tower and toward his fire station, holding his daughter close to his chest as he went.

TOM LAMONT is a writer based in London.



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himself as an activist shareholder; he and his staff would piece together who was ripping off what, name names, try to impose a modicum of order on a lawless system.

When Vladimir Putin rose to power, Browder believed he was a reformer eager to purge the kleptocracy. In 2003, for example, Putin arrested the country's richest man, oil magnate Mikhail Khodorkovsky, charged him with fraud, and displayed him in a cage in a courtroom until his inevitable conviction. In the context of the time, many critics saw the ordeal as a capricious show trial orchestrated by an authoritarian thug.

Not Browder. "I would trust Putin any day of the week," he told the *Washington Post* in early 2004. "It's like being in a lawless schoolyard where there's bullies running around and beating up all us little people, and then one day a big bully comes along and all the little bullies fall into line. That's what the state is supposed to be—the big bully."

But Putin, he discovered, wasn't pushing for good corporate governance. He was taking over the rackets. Putin put Khodorkovsky in a cage for the same reason Vito Corleone put a horse's head in Jack Woltz's bed: to send a message. Oligarchs could steal, but they had to pay tribute.

Oligarchs no longer needed to be named and shamed; they needed to be kept in line and keep earning. At that point, an activist shareholder like Browder became an expensive nuisance. Browder was kicked out of the country on November 13, 2005.

For a while, he thought the Russian bureaucracy had made a mistake by canceling his visa, confusing him with someone else, perhaps, or misfiling some paperwork. He enlisted the help of British diplomats—Browder had been a British citizen since 1998—to no avail. There had been no mistake. Browder had been declared a threat to Russian national security.

Hermitage Capital remained in business, though, its office run by Browder's staff while he oversaw operations from London. But in Moscow, the pressure only increased. In June 2007, security forces raided Hermitage and the office of the law firm it employed. They carted away computers and files and, interestingly, all the corporate seals and stamps. At first, none of that made sense.

But then Sergei Magnitsky, a 36-year-old Muscovite who handled tax matters for Hermitage, started digging around. He eventually discovered three of Hermitage's holding companies had been used by Russian gangsters to swindle \$230 million in tax rebates. It was a straight-up robbery of the Russian treasury. The scam wasn't unheard of, except the amount was perhaps the largest such tax fraud ever uncovered in Russia.

Browder and his staff reported the theft to the authorities and the media in the summer of 2008. They even named suspects, including some of the security officials who'd earlier been involved in the office raids. Nothing happened. Then, a few months later, on November 24, 2008, Sergei was arrested at his home.

He was held for nearly a year in various prisons, overrun with rats and damp with sewage. According to complaints Sergei wrote, he was fed porridge infested with insects and rotten fish boiled into mush. He contracted pancreatitis and gallstones but was refused treatment. Yet he was repeatedly told he would be released if he would recant his allegations and, instead, implicate Browder as the mastermind of the tax scam. He refused every time.

Almost a year after he was arrested, desperately ill, Sergei was handcuffed to a bed rail in an isolation cell. Eight guards beat him with rubber truncheons. A little more than an hour later, he was dead.

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BEFORE SERGEI WAS KILLED, Browder had been lobbying anyone he could think of to pressure the Russians into releasing his accountant. One of the agencies he approached in the spring of 2009 was the U.S. Helsinki Commission, an independent federal agency in Washington that monitors human rights in 57 countries, including Russia.

Kyle Parker, one of the Russia experts there, wasn't interested. He knew who Browder was—the money manager who'd championed Putin, the guy who'd made the rounds of Western capitals a few years earlier trying to get his visa restored. He assumed that's what Browder was still after. "Not gonna be able to make it," he e-mailed a colleague scheduling the meeting. "Unless much has changed, I see this meeting as info only and would not support any action on our part."

He eventually met with Browder, though, and he listened to the story of Sergei. Parker understood, but it didn't seem especially uncommon. "I was thinking: Why is Bill trying to suck us into a pissing match between competing criminal groups?"

Parker didn't even include Sergei in a 2009 letter to Obama highlighting the commission's most pressing concerns.

After Sergei had been killed, Browder went back to the Helsinki Commission.

Parker told him how sorry he was. He told him that he cried when he heard Sergei was dead, that he read about it through teary eyes on the Metro, riding the Red Line home to his wife and kids. He said he was going to help.

"Here you have this Russian hero almost of a literary quality in Sergei Magnitsky," Parker told me. "He wasn't a guy who went to rallies with a bullhorn and protested human-rights abuses in Chechnya. He was a bookish, middle-class Muscovite. I see Sergei metaphorically as that Chinese guy standing in front of the tanks, but with a briefcase. He provided an example for all the other Russians that not everybody goes in for the deal, not everybody is corrupt, not everybody looks the other way when people are swindled."

What Browder wanted was some form of justice for Sergei, though what form that would take was unclear. He'd researched his options for months. The Russians weren't going to prosecute anyone—officially, Sergei

died of heart failure. There was no international mechanism to hold Russian nationals criminally accountable in another country. "Eventually," Browder said, "it became obvious that I was going to have to come up with justice on my own."

He outlined a three-pronged approach. One was media, simply getting Sergei's name and his death and the reasons for it into the public consciousness. He talked to reporters, and he produced a series of YouTube videos, short documentaries on the people allegedly involved in Sergei's death.

The second was tracing the money. "They killed him for \$230 million," Browder said, "and I was going to find out where that money went." It was parceled out to dozens of people, tucked away in Swiss accounts and American real estate and Panamanian banks, some of it held by proxies; part of it allegedly ended up in the account of a Russian cellist who happened to be a childhood friend of Putin's. By mining bank transfers and financial records, Browder and his staff have accounted for much of it, including \$14 million allegedly laundered by a Cypriot company into Manhattan property. (The Justice Department froze those funds in 2013 but settled with the company, Prevezon, last summer for \$5.9 million. Prevezon's owner, a Russian named Denis Katsyv, is represented by Natalia Veselnitskaya. The case did not allege that he had any role in Magnitsky's death.)

The final prong was political. Browder had heard about an obscure regulation that allows the State Department to put visa restrictions on corrupt foreign officials. But in the spring of 2010, the Obama administration was attempting to normalize relations with Russia—a "reset," as Obama famously put it. People die horrible deaths every day, and it's terrible and it shouldn't happen. But Russia is also a large country with a significant sphere of geopolitical influence and a lot of nuclear weapons. In that context, a dead middle-class tax lawyer wasn't relevant.

But what if, Parker suggested, they went to Congress? What if the legislature, rather than the administration, took action?

That was also a long shot. Getting any law passed is difficult, let alone one the administration opposes. But Browder told Sergei's story to congressional committees and individual senators and congressmen, and he kept telling it until the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act was passed by both houses of Congress and signed into law 11 days before Christmas 2012.

The act originally named 18 Russians, including bureaucrats implicated in the original scam; investigators Sergei had accused of being involved and getting a cut of the \$230 million; jailers who tormented him; and two alleged killers. As more of the stolen money was traced, more names were added to the list. Everyone on it is banned from entering the United States and, more damaging, cut off from the American banking system. That has a ripple effect: Legitimate financial institutions all over the world monitor the Treasury Department list of sanctioned individuals and are loath to do business with anyone on it. "That's what people hate about it the most," Browder said. "It makes you a financial leper."

And that matters to Putin, Browder maintains, because the Russians on the list are not

independently wealthy, like, say, Bill Gates or Richard Branson. "They're *dependently* wealthy," he said. "They're dependent on Putin." If the deal is that corrupt Russians can keep their cash in return for their loyalty, the Magnitsky Act is an enormous thorn in Putin's side. If he can't protect anyone's pilfered money, what's the point of loyalty? Putin surely understands that, because he was so transparently rattled: Taking orphans hostage is not the reasoned reaction of a man merely annoyed.

Browder initially wanted to call the law the Justice for Sergei Magnitsky Act. But Parker never took to that. "Banning some corrupt officials from coming here isn't even close to justice," he said. "But it's a legislative monument to Sergei Magnitsky until one day Russia builds a stone monument to him. Because I have no doubt he'll be seen as the Russian patriot and hero that he was."

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NOT QUITE THREE WEEKS after the *Times* broke the story of Veselnitskaya lobbying the Trump campaign to get rid of the Magnitsky Act, Browder testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee about, primarily, how Russian operatives wield influence and frame their propaganda. Eight years after he'd started targeting a handful of Russian crooks, Browder was suddenly very relevant to a much larger political storm.

He flew home to London after he testified but had to return to the United States in early August. He checked in at an airline counter in Heathrow but was told there was a problem with his visa. He'd been flagged by Interpol, which had issued a red notice on him. It's basically an international arrest warrant, and it was the fourth requested by the Russians for Browder. Technically, a member nation is supposed to extradite him to the country that asked for the notice. But the British, along with other sensible Western nations, stopped taking Russia's attempts regarding Browder seriously years ago.

In the end, it was only an inconvenience. But what if he'd been in, say, Finland when that notice popped up? The Finns are fine people, but they also have a 500-mile border with Russia. Would letting Browder go be worth risking an international incident with a bigger, more aggressive neighbor? He can make a reasonable case that, no, he would not be worth it. "I'm very realistic about who's coming to my defense," he said. "I am my defense."

So he's careful. He avoids countries that might be friendly to Putin. Much of the Third World is out. So is Hong Kong. He'd be fine in Japan, but only if he didn't fly over Russian airspace. What if the plane has trouble and makes an emergency landing in Novosibirsk? That's where Khodorkovsky was seized and hauled off to a cage.

Even in London, he's cautious. He won't talk about his family or where he lives. He varies his schedule and his route to work every day. He doesn't eat in the same restaurant twice in succession, or in any restaurant with predictable frequency; Russian agents have reputedly twice poisoned dissidents in London. He told me the British government has rebuffed at least a dozen requests to extradite him, and American intelligence has warned him that Russian agents planned to grab him off the street.

Years ago, a Russian living in London came to Browder's staff with information about certain wealthy, corrupt people in Moscow. He was cagey and shifty and, at first, it seemed like he might be a Russian agent trying to plant false clues. But his information checked out and Browder learned who he really was. His name was Alexander Perepilichnyy, and he was nervous because he believed he was on a Russian hit list.

On November 10, 2012, Perepilichnyy dropped dead in front of his house in Surrey. There was no obvious cause of death—no heart attack or stroke or aneurysm—and an inquest wasn't opened until last June. Perepilichnyy wasn't a well-known dissident, so no one thought to take a hard look when he died. "They got away with it," Browder said, meaning the Russians. "That's a perfect example of why you don't want to be an anonymous guy who drops dead."

So Browder is deliberately not anonymous. He does not live in cloistered fear. When a car service got confused trying to pick him up for a photo shoot—definitely a way to not be anonymous—we took the Tube a few stops, then walked through Kentish Town to the studio. There was no security, just two men wandering around London. He has hobbies that he asked I not name, but none of them are solitary or sedentary. "One thing I can tell you," he said, "with the threat of death hanging over you, you live life to the fullest." He laughed a little.

In this new version of his life, Browder is still most often referred to as a financier, but that's only marginally true. He gave all his investors their money back, and manages only his own now. Justice for Sergei—and aggravating Putin—is his full-time job. His staff of 11 tracks money launderers, deciphering which flunkie is fronting for which oligarch, sniffing out the rest of that \$230 million. He lobbies other governments to pass their own versions of the Magnitsky Act. The United Kingdom has one, as does Estonia. Lithuania is close, and Canada passed one in October. "Unconstructive political games," Putin told a Canadian interviewer immediately after, orchestrated by "the criminal activities of an entire gang led by one particular man, I believe Browder is his name."

And Putin wasn't finished. A week later, Russia slipped another red notice into Interpol's system. For the second time in three months, Browder was temporarily barred from entering the U.S. It's relentless, Putin clawing at him, thrashing. "Their main objective is to get me back to Russia," he said. "And they only have to get lucky once. I have to be lucky every time."

"Everything Bill's done has cost him tremendously," Parker said. "It's cost him money, restricted his personal freedom. And he didn't have to. He was out of Russia. He could have done what many did and walked away. Bad things happen, right? But here's a guy who's proven whatever he needed to prove to himself. He made his money. Now here's a way to find meaning. It's also a debt of honor."

No, it's more than that. "It's penance," Browder said. Sergei Magnitsky was an ordinary Muscovite who happened to work for an American who annoyed Vladimir Putin. "Sergei was killed because of me. He was killed *instead* of me." He let that hang there a moment. "So, yeah, it's all penance."

SEAN FLYNN is a GQ correspondent.

KEVIN DURANT



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Barroca was now fired up. He pointed at Durant. "You want to see him do the tiger?"

The kids yelled back their assent. Durant took a deep breath. Then he got down in a crouch, legs bowed, each hand outstretched and curled, like a tiger.

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THE NEXT TIME I saw Durant was in San Francisco, in September, on what he described as one of the worst days of his life. He'd invited me to come see him dedicate another court his foundation had built, this time in Menlo Park. The following day, he and Kleiman were scheduled to speak at TechCrunch Disrupt about the investment fund they'd started together—a local rite of passage. But the morning of the court dedication, Durant had been caught doing something embarrassing: After a user on Twitter had asked him to explain his decision to leave OKC for Golden State, Durant responded in the third person, leading to speculation that he maintained other, phantom accounts on Twitter but accidentally replied from his own. "He didn't like the [Thunder] organization or playing for Billy Donovan," Durant wrote about his former team and coach in a tweet that he soon deleted. "His roster wasn't that good, it was just him and Russ," he said, referring to his former teammate Russell Westbrook. Then he followed up the post with a second one: "Imagine taking Russ off that team, see how bad they were. KD can't win a championship with those cats."

All summer, Durant had been forging a new and unexpected reputation as one of the most honest athletes in sports, engaging with fans on Twitter—often in rude, hilarious ways—and sitting for loose, freewheeling interviews. Maybe he still didn't know exactly what to do with himself when he wasn't playing, but he was more confident about his opinions than he'd been before, and he was having fun sharing them. He gave candid assessments of other athletes; he publicly criticized the president, something the younger Durant never would've done, saying he would not visit the White House if invited. ("I don't respect who's in office right now," he explained to ESPN.) "I know right from wrong," he told me. "You call bullshit like you see it. You just call bullshit."

But now perhaps he'd been too honest. The Internet was alive with a gleeful debate about whether Durant had a second, secret Twitter account. That wasn't the case, he told me. He did write the posts, but on his own account, he said. He described it as a dissociative episode: He woke up from a nap, and "it just felt like I was on the outside looking in at a conversation. I had to walk in and just be like, 'Nah.'" Either way, he appeared thin-skinned and a bit disingenuous, inexplicably absorbed in

criticism during the pinnacle of his professional life. Even worse was what he'd actually said in the posts: After a year of maintaining a scrupulous, respectful silence about his old coach and his old team, he'd finally let slip what seemed to be the truth about his feelings regarding the Oklahoma City Thunder.

The next 24 hours of Durant's life unfolded in a miserable procession. At the court dedication, held at the Menlo Park Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula, he arrived in a Pink Floyd T-shirt, his face in visible pain. Every 30 seconds or so, he checked Twitter. Condoleezza Rice, who is on the advisory council of the BGCP, appeared in a red blouse; zombie-like, Durant posed for a photo with her, and then wandered away. As part of the ceremony, he was interviewed on a makeshift stage by two high school students. One of them asked a seemingly innocuous question about who had helped Durant believe in himself and be self-confident. "I still struggle to feel confident in myself," he responded. "I still struggle with seeking approval from others sometimes, not realizing that I'm winning in life. Sometimes I tend to go backwards. But that's just part of life. Don't feel down about it. Don't feel upset. Don't feel embarrassed, even though you are embarrassed at times.... I'm having a bad day today. But you guys are giving me life."

After the interview ended, he wandered back over to Kleiman: "Anything new on Twitter?" he asked.

At TechCrunch the next day, inside a giant warehouse on a San Francisco pier, Durant looked exhausted. "I didn't eat yesterday," he told me. "I wanted to go disappear. I didn't even feel like that when I switched teams." He'd come to terms with what he'd said, but he was still struggling with the embar-

LeBron James "is four years older than me, so he's still the big homie," says Durant. "Off the court, I can learn a thing from you. I feel like it's 1A, 1B."

rassment of it. The TechCrunch moderator, Jordan Crook, came backstage to prep Durant and Kleiman and preview her questions. What do they invest in? How do they protect their investments and keep themselves safe from sharks? "And...I'm going to have to ask about the Twitter thing yesterday," she said apologetically. "You don't have to answer. But I have to ask." Durant sighed and then nodded in resignation.

Onstage, he gamely answered the question. "That was childish," he said. "That was idiotic, all those type of words. I regret doing that. I apologize to him for doing that." Finally he climbed into a car to go back to his home, in the hills above Oakland. On the way, he said he was relieved to have dealt with the episode. He leaned back in his seat. Today and yesterday were a step backward, and he admitted that. But he was trying to forgive himself. "Everybody has those times when

they go back. They relapse a little bit. You know what I'm saying?"

It was a fleetingly bizarre moment in a summer otherwise spent in the gauzy high of winning a championship: from superhuman to all too human in less than three months. From afar, the spectacle was riveting, even endearing: a guy this talented and self-possessed who nevertheless bled, who was petty like the rest of us could be petty, who seemed to be figuring things out at the normal 29-year-old rate, even though he was otherwise nothing like a normal 29-year-old. But living, and making mistakes, in public was wearing on Durant. By the end of the summer, he was eager to return to doing what he was actually paid to do. "I really thought that each level I go up to is more and more just hoops," he told me. "There's less and less hoops! And that's a rude awakening for a basketball player like me."

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IN LATE SEPTEMBER, the Warriors finally began playing basketball again. This was a relief to Durant—at last, a constant, familiar thing that he knew all too well how to do. When in Oakland, Durant lives in an airy, spacious house on the side of a hill overlooking the San Francisco Bay. His home is sparsely decorated, with a few personal touches: a photo of his mother on a mantel, next to one of Durant and Barack Obama in basketball shorts. His house is not far from the Warriors' practice facility; the team will move to a new arena in San Francisco in 2019, and Durant, at the moment, plans to move with them.

"It's a transition to a different life," he said about California. "Every day I wake up, I'm still getting used to living in the Bay Area. And I'm still getting used to playing with new teammates and putting on a new jersey. It's gonna take me some time. You settle down somewhere for so long, it's just like, no matter if you just moved, you still gonna feel that adjustment." But he also enjoyed living where he was living, around Silicon Valley guys and CEOs. "A lot of those people, they just think a little different," he told me. "They simplify their lives, and they have some clarity. And when you have those two things, you kind of see things for what they are. Some stuff is not as big as you think it is. You're not as important, or the situation may not be as important, as you think it is. Brian Grazer taught me that."

Being able to play again was restoring Durant's perspective in a hurry. "I came here to play basketball in the exact same way I'm playing it right now," he said contentedly. Over the summer, he'd signed a second deal with the Warriors, for less money than he could've asked for, and the Warriors had in turn used the money he saved them to re-sign several of Durant's teammates. He was enjoying being just a member of a team, rather than the face of it. "Steph Curry is the face of the franchise, and that helps me out, because I don't have to," he said. "I don't want to have to be the leader. I'm not a leader. I'm bad at saying, 'Stand behind me and follow me.' No. I'm one of those guys that's just like, 'Let's do this shit together. Let's just work everybody together. I don't mind being on the front line with you, but let's come and do it together.' That's my way of leadership. I'm leading by example."

He was settling in for his second year on a team that was already, in his first, historically

great. Meanwhile, the rest of the league was frantically trying to catch up. Stars like Paul George, Carmelo Anthony, Chris Paul, and Jimmy Butler all changed teams, as general managers around the league tried to counter what the Warriors already had. In perhaps the summer's most shocking trade, the Celtics unexpectedly shipped their small, pugnacious point guard Isaiah Thomas to the Cleveland Cavaliers in exchange for Kyrie Irving. Thomas, who'd played for the Celtics through injuries and a personal tragedy, was devastated to be traded. On The Players' Tribune, Thomas reflected on what he'd learned from the experience: "I was thinking about that last year with KD and his free agency—about how people gave him such a hard time for doing what he felt was best for him and his future." Thomas wrote that his example should make fans wary of judging decisions like Durant's: "So when players are getting moved left and right, and having their lives changed without any say-so, and it's no big deal...but then the handful of times it flips, and the player has control...then it's some scandal?"

Durant told me that he was happy to see that Thomas had mentioned him. "I can appreciate him just kind of having my back a little bit on that," he said. In this respect, he was happy to lead. With the Warriors, Durant had decided to follow LeBron James's example of signing one-year deals—two years, technically, but with a player option for the second year—that effectively prevent him from being traded at all. Together, the two men seem to be modeling a future of the league in which players—stars, anyway—control their own destinies. "We always had the power, as players," Durant told me. "We're just realizing it now. It's like when you wake up—we woke now. And a lot of people didn't want us to be woke. They wanted us to stay in this trance, that we felt like we had to live our life based on what somebody else does. They can move us when they want to, they can sign us when they want to.... We got control of that now."

LeBron, he said, was the one who "gave me the courage to do that"—first to change teams, and then to sign the deals that he's signed since. "Now, I could have did a better job studying how he approached everything after that. But I did it my way. And the next guy is gonna look at me as an example. We're all working together now." He said that ever since he came into the league, he'd been mindful of James's way of doing things. He follows it still, in some respects, he said, though he was pleased to have gained some ground on the court. "He's four years older than me, so he's still the big homie. But I'm on the same level as a basketball player. Off the court, I can learn a thing from you. But as a basketball player, I feel like it's 1A, 1B. And that's an accomplishment for me."

He said he still thinks about the shot he hit over James pretty much every day. "That feeling was amazing," he said. "But also, I'm gonna put that memory to the side when I start up again and just go play." That moment had now arrived; he was letting it all go. "It feels like...it's a weird year," Durant said, looking out the window at the still unfamiliar view. "It is weird. But I still had fun. Right? You can have a weird year and still have fun."

ZACH BARON is GQ's staff writer.

RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR



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ignore their food, perhaps on the theory that if you cared too much about Lunch you weren't wielding enough Power. And yet who are we looking toward to re-create this golden era of food-as-fuel but famous chefs? After a generation of privileging the kitchen over the front of the house, that's who's left. And I suspect there's no going back, anyway. We already know too much. Which means The Grill will always be just as much of an art project as, say, Vesptine—the L.A. restaurant that opened around the same time, promising, among other things, to be "a place of cognitive dissonance that defies categorization...from a time that is yet to be, and a place that does not exist."

Or, as a fresh-faced young banker happily put it to me as we nursed our Gibsons at The Grill's bar: "It's like Disneyland!"

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SO WHERE DOES THAT leave The Pool? The nature of The Grill's fantasy is easy to understand. What Disney pavilion do you enter when you walk down that hallway toward its sister restaurant?

I'm still not sure, and I'm not sure Torrisi and Carbone are, either. Like members of a classic-rock band, the partners have the reputation of falling on either side of a heart-mind divide: Torrisi the brooding Lennon-like artiste, Carbone the McCartneyite purveyor of pop sunshine. The split is literalized in the side-by-side kitchens of The Grill, which is run by Carbone, and The Pool, which is Torrisi's domain. Like brothers sharing a bedroom, they've cut the space in half with different shades of flooring, the name of each restaurant, inlaid in brass, demarcating its side of the border.

There's no shortage of magic at The Pool. Under the spell of a few ounces of gin, awash in the burble of conversation and a counter-intuitively perfect soundtrack of early reggae, it's a wonderful space. It's also huge and, with less than a full house, risks feeling like a banquet hall after half the wedding has gone home. When the clock chimes midnight, you get the feeling that the dignified pool might turn back into a squalid Jacuzzi.

Simply put, it's a lot of room to fill, and Torrisi largely attempts to do so on the plate, rather than with elaborate service. The menu is almost exclusively seafood—though the Instagram money shot is a rose fashioned from shaved foie gras, served on a polished glass cube. There's a beet mille-feuille so charred and smoky you could close your eyes and believe you were eating barbecue. The fish entrées are immaculate, but they're also strangely dull. It pains me to wonder whether that's a function of seafood being unable to stand up to the meaty pleasures next door. It does suggest that The Pool requires a different approach to its quieter fireworks.

What I wanted, I realized, to my own surprise, was the very thing that The Grill and The Pool are a reaction against: for Torrisi to embrace his autocratic side and present a multi-course tasting menu. To do so would place the restaurants in fascinating dialogue with each other and nearly the entire spectrum of fine dining under one roof: New Nostalgia and Non Nostalgia, side by side.

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YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED something else that binds the list of New Nostalgia restaurants mentioned above. There are smatterings of the trend elsewhere in the country, but I don't think it's an accident that it is rooted in Manhattan—the place whose power and centrality have been most diminished by the proliferation of good food into the nation's every nook and cranny of the nation. The Grill and The Pool are the sound of the Empire striking back, Death Star-style. "Go ahead," they, and the island they sit on, seem to roar. "Move the James Beard Awards to Chicago. Build a 'Brooklyn' in every reclaimed industrial downtown across the country. Point fingers at our stifling combination of high rent and toxic buzz addiction. Lure our chefs home to Minneapolis, to St. Louis, to Iowa City. Let them open nice neighborhood restaurants serving nice neighborhood food, take Sundays off, live in houses with porches, have the prospect of a happy, semi-prosperous normal adulthood. We will always have *this*"—"this" being shit-ton tons of money and extraordinary urban spaces. Those are Gotham's fossil fuels, and the Seagram Building is its Strategic Reserve. Is it any wonder it's been tapped just as the lights start to seriously flicker? These restaurants are everything great about New York, a triumph of the New York a kid might dream about growing up in the hinterlands of Deep Brooklyn. It remains to be seen whether they are also a last desperate howl before that greatness sinks, glittering like the *Titanic*, beneath the waves forever.

BRETT MARTIN is a GQ correspondent.

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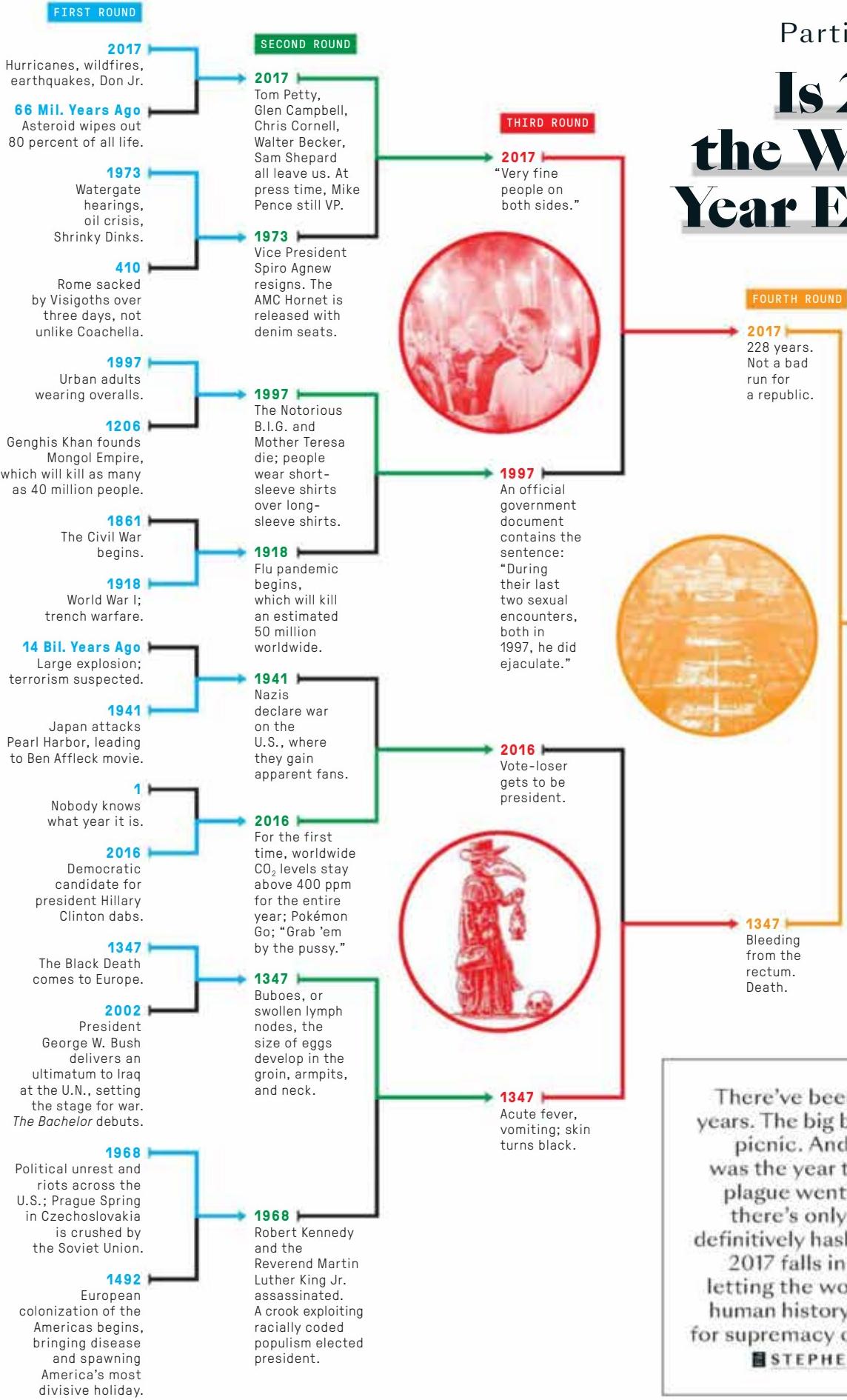
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Parting Shot

Is 2017 the Worst Year Ever?



There've been some bad years. The big bang was no picnic. And then there was the year the bubonic plague went...viral? But there's only one way to definitively hash out where 2017 falls in the mix: by letting the worst years in human history duke it out for supremacy of the shitty

STEPHEN SHERRILL



We're all used to the way security is:

Control panels, contracts,
passcodes and paranoia.

Lots of hurry hurry, quick quick.

But what if security were different?

What if it felt like
it was one step ahead?

With the answers to
"What was that?" and
"Who is that?" just like that.

What if it were tough on
bad guys, easy on you?

What if it were so simple to use,
you actually used it?

nest

From now on, this is security.



Nest Guard



Nest Tag



Nest Detect



Nest Cam IQ indoor



Nest Cam IQ outdoor



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